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EAGLE EYE;

EAGLE EYE.
OR,

CHAPTER I.

RALPH WARREN AND HIS RED FRIEND.

A STORY OF THE FALL OF OSWEGO.

BY W. J. HAMILTON.

NEW YORK:

BEADLE AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,

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EAGLE EYE;

OR,

RALPH WARREN AND HIS RED FRIEND.

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EAGLE EYE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO SCOUTS.

OSWEGO, in the State of New York, was, at the time of this story, one of the most important, (if not in reality *the* most important,) post upon the great lakes. Situated, as it is, within a few hours' sail of Canada, then in possession of the French, it excited their anger, as being the point at which the expeditions gathered which worried them from time to time. Then, again, it was in a favorable position to hold in awe the powerful and restless Iroquois, in the very heart of whose country it was situated. These were, or pretended to be, in favor of the English; and, while the majority of the chiefs no doubt favored their interests, the younger chiefs and many warriors took the war-path when there was trouble between the French and English. And, during the long and bloody struggle known as the "French and Indian War," in the Colonial history of our country, they harassed the border, cutting off every straggler from the camps, falling upon small parties forcing their way through the forest from Albany. The history of this struggle is intensely interesting, and the descendants of the old settlers have many a reminiscence preserved, as family heir-looms, of the suffering or wild adventure of their forefathers who dwelt in that region.

Oswego is upon Lake Ontario, on both sides of the river of the same name—then called by the name of Onondaga, from the tribe of the Six Nations who lived about its headwaters. The river is a broad, rapid stream, broken toward the mouth into rapids. The most important of these was called Little Falls, near the present village of Fulton. Another, nearly as steep and strong, is within half a mile of the city.

Near the mouth, the river widens and deepens, forming one of the best harbors on the Lakes. That both parties coveted this was apparent, as the many bloody struggles for its possession testified.

The English first had recognized its importance, and, as early as 1727, had erected a block-house upon one of the bluffs at the mouth of the river, while, in the year 1728, they began a series of strong works on both sides of the stream. The place was admirably situated for defensive purposes—the bluffs on both sides of the river being high, and rising in a perpendicular wall from the water, both along the river, and on the shore. No ship could enter the harbor, if those forts were fully manned, and ably defended. At the season when the more important incidents of my story occurred, the post had been strengthened to such a degree as to be thought impregnable to any force the enemy could send against it.

For some time, there had been mutterings of an approaching combat. Montcalm, the most famous French partisan leader of his day, was busy at Quebec and Montreal. Scouts brought word of immense cannon, and of an army gathering on the northern shore of the lake. The English commander—a man experienced in affairs—sent word to Albany of the danger menacing the post; but, with the foolhardiness common to colonial governments, the authorities there scoffed at the idea of an invasion by the French, and made no preparations to meet the coming foe.

On a beautiful day in the month of July, 1756, two men were sitting under the shadow of a great hemlock, near the place where the river Oneida empties its waters into the Seneca, forming the Oswego. They were lounging in indolent ease—one puffing vigorously at a long Indian pipe, the other whittling, and, by this action, proclaiming his nationality, at once. For the Yankee of those times was the Yankee of to-day, and the “jack-knife” was among the *necessary* articles. The smoker was an Indian, wearing the dress of the Onondagas. It is hard to judge the age of an Indian. This man probably was forty years of age. His dress was a hunting-shirt of dressed deerskin, beaded and slashed, with gilt buttons at the breast. His leggins were fringed, and decorated by the same skillful hand. His arms consisted of a long knife and

heavy natchet, with the rifle which lay within reach of his hand. He wore the feather head-dress alone, and was, altogether, a noble specimen of agile strength. When he lifted his arm, the great muscles stood out like cordage. His eyes were dark, quick and restless, and, at every rustle which came from the woods, he would glance sharply round, and only settle into quiet when he recognized the sound.

His companion was a young white man, dressed much like himself, and his very image in length of limb and muscle. He was dressed, too, like the Onondaga, only his head was surmounted by a coonskin cap, the tails dropping gracefully down upon his shoulders. He had a careless, handsome face, with a clear, unflinching eye, and a smiling lip. He was smiling *now*. And yet, he was the most daring scout and pitiless enemy the French had to fear on that border.

Ralph Warren had been a quiet citizen, living with his father on the Mohawk. One day, a roving band of French and Indians came down upon the settlement. Few escaped the merciless tomahawk of the savages; but among them was Ralph, who broke for the woods, when he saw that there was no hope, and escaped. Next day, he returned to his once happy home. Heart-sick with anguish, he buried the bones of his father, mother and baby sister. From that day he took to the woods, and woe to the Indian of the Huron tribe, or the Frenchman, who came within range of his rifle.

He had a brave companion in Ut-ta-wan, who had been a chief among his tribe. But, through jealousy, repeated insults had been laid upon him, until he turned his back upon the graves of his fathers, forswore all companionship with his family, and became a scout, hated and feared by all roving bands, no matter under what flag they lived. Few cared to buckle with him in single combat, knowing the power of his arm. The English commanders would have lost any company in their force, sooner than either of these trusty men.

"Did my brother see the war-chief?" asked Ut-ta-wan.

The other made an impatient gesture, and answered:

"Yes, I saw him, and this is just where it is. You and I know more about the designs of the French than all the men in New York put together. Very good; I go down to Albany, and find Abercrombie, and tell him that the French are going

to attack Oswego. What did he say? Why, that he did not believe it, because an *Indian* had told him that the French were not making any preparation to attack us, at all; that they were waiting for us to pitch in. Well, I went round, and found out who it was that told him so. And who do you think it was?"

"Ugh! Don't know—Huron, p'r'aps," said the chief, sententiously.

"No, it was not, though. It was I-re-ton, the Mohawk."

The eyes of Ut-ta-wan glowed like a suddenly lighted fire, and he muttered, under his breath: "Bes' him keep out my way. Take his scalp, if catch him."

"I met him in the street, fair and square, the next day. The rascal wasn't quite ready to meet me, and tried to dodge down an alley. But it was no use. I looked him right in the eye, and went on."

"Why not take scalp? Never kill no more fader, nor mudder, den."

"It wouldn't have paid. There were half a dozen of his tribe about him, and I knew it was no use. But let him beware; I shall have him yet, in spite of his cunning. He may think to escape, but, in time, I will bring him down, or die trying."

"S'pose him come to Oswâgo?"

"Think he will. You know I did not give you the whistle when I found you at Oneida Lake?"

"No."

"I-re-ton had followed me all the way from Albany. I saw him once, from a hole where I was hidden, and I could have put out my hand and touched him, chief."

Ut-ta-wan rose, and looked to the flint of his rifle, loosened his knife and hatchet, and prepared to start.

"Where now?" asked Ralph.

"Me go scout," was the short reply. "When you hear hawk call *twice*, swim out to the point. I be there with canoe."

The young scout, who had half risen, cast himself indolently back on the sward, while his red friend plunged into the forest, with his rifle on a trail. His pace was the short trot peculiar to the Indian, but light and rapid, hardly stirring

the forest leaves. Without another thought of the danger, Ralph lay upon his back, looking up into the sky. He was a dreamer—this young wood-king—and was thinking that, from the blue heavens bent above, perhaps his slaughtered family were looking down on him. From this reverie, he was startled by a piercing yell, coming from the woods, a few rods away. Then came, a moment after, a wailing cry, which had sounded too often in his ear to be misunderstood; it was the scalp-cry of an Indian.

He was on his feet in a second, with the ready rifle in his hand. The cry was not repeated from that point; but, for half a mile through the woods, on every side, gathering yells told him that the gang of I-re-ton was at hand. Who had fallen? He hardly thought that it was the chief, for it would have been a wily savage who circumvented him. He ran quickly down to the edge of the river, and under the close shelter of overhanging bushes, awaited events. Half an hour passed, and the scout had almost begun to doubt whether his friend was indeed safe, when the cry of a hawk came with startling earnestness across the water. He waited. Again came the cry. And when the third call sounded, his rifle already was lashed to a log, together with his powder-horn and pouch, and he launched out into the water. The point, now known as "Three Rivers," was covered with a luxuriant growth of maple and beech. The river was rapid, but the strong swimmer soon accomplished the distance, and stood dripping on the shore. Only a moment he tarried there, and then buried himself in the bushes. Scarcely had he done so, when a puff of white smoke rose from the opposite shore, and a bullet sung sharply by him. Then a tufted head appeared, looking eagerly out for the effect of the shot. That sealed his doom. For, simultaneously with his appearance, came the crack of the scout's rifle, and he fell forward on his face, in the ooze of the river bank, with a bullet through his brain.

"Fool," muttered the avenger, as he began to load; "he rushed upon his own fate. Where is Ut-ta-wan?"

"Here," said a voice, and turning, he saw the chief at his elbow. He was stripping off his superfluous clothing. The scout laid his hand upon his arm.

"Where are you going, chief?"

"Take Mohawk scalp. Got *one* scalp. Mus' have *two*."

"You shall not risk your life for that Indian's head-piece," said the scout, half angrily.

"Why not? What risk be? What if be kill? Den *Mohawk* get scalp may be; if not, get Ut-ta-wan nudder scalp, self."

"You are not going, though. You have work before you. There!"

A brown hand reached out, caught the dead Indian by the heel, and the body disappeared from view. A look of intense disgust passed over the face of the chief. The coveted trophy was gone!

"See now; los' *good* scalp. Bumbye me take nudder scalp, better'n dat. Whar' go now, Big Elk?"

"We must get to Oswego to-night. I am too mad to live, almost, for I should have brought up at least two thousand regulars from below. But if Abercrombie would be a fool, I can't help it. Did you find the canoe?"

Without answer, the Indian led the way to the other side of the point. A bark canoe lay moored upon the shore. Ralph sat down in the shadow of the bushes, and lifted his coon-skin cap upon his rifle. He sought to know if the Indians were on the opposite bank of the Seneca, as well as the Oneida. Whiz! zip! came the bullets, driving into the trunks of the trees, splashing the water before him, and cutting the twigs about his head, while a fierce yell, as the coon-skin sunk down, perforated by two balls, told that the foe hoped they had slain the redoubtable "Big Elk," as Ralph was called among the tribes, with whom he had a terrible reputation. He laughed low, and thrust his fingers into the holes, looking at the chief.

"Good eye," said the Onondaga; "I-re-ton dere."

"How do you know?"

"Can't help know him rifle. Heard it *many* time. Good shot, he be."

"I'll pay him, if he'll only show himself."

"Won't, dough. Him old chief, long on war-path. Young brave show himself, get hit; know better nex' time."

"We are in a trap, Eagle Eye."

"S'pose so. Some gone up Oneida, cross over, and come

down on Seneca. More come down on point ; take we scalp."

The imperturbable calmness of the chief was too much for the equanimity of even Ralph. But the Indian's face was set like steel.

"We are caught, then, I suppose?"

"Nebber t'ought dey'd go dere. S'pose we caught now. Mus' *stay* caught, s'pose. When Ut-ta-wan git ready, den him go! See dis? Eh?"

Near at hand lay the stick to which he had lashed his rifle, and which an eddy had whirled round into the little cove where they stood. It was a basswood, about six feet long. The Indian laid his hand upon it, and drew it further up the beach. The log was about three feet through. The chief began with his hatchet to cut out the lower side which was quite rotten.

"What are you going to do; hide the guns?" asked Ralph.

"No; make canoe nudder way. You see," and the man cut away rapidly at the log. When he had done, he put his head into the aperture, and drew it out with a satisfied look. A smile passed over the face of Ralph, and a sigh of relief passed his lips.

"Ah, I see. That is what you are up to; it will save us. I thought my time to die had not come yet. Roll it under these bushes. Be quick, for these Mohawk knaves are getting uneasy, and those who are coming down behind can not be far off. Give me your knife."

The other did as desired, and the young man coolly cut out the bottom of their only ark of safety. This did not disconcert the chief in the least, who was quietly placing the rifles and ammunition on little pegs he had driven into the sides of his new canoe. Just as he had finished, the scout joined him.

Five minutes after, a log, very nearly resembling the one on which they had been at work, floated slowly out from under the bushes, turning and whirling down the eddies in a very natural and unsuspecting manner. How it would have vexed the soul of I-re-ton, under whose very nose that log floated, as he lay in the branches of a tree stretching out over the

water, had he but known that his most hated enemies, with their heads thrust into the under side of their novel ark, were laughing in their secret hearts at his discomfiture. But, I-re-ton, not having the strength of vision necessary for looking through six inches of bark and wood, let the log pass. Under ordinary circumstances, this would have been well; but, knowing the desperate cunning of the two scouts, it is strange he let it go.

But the log floated on, whirling about in every eddy, bumping against the rocks, and doing every thing a log might be supposed to do, under the control of the waters. Now near the shore, now far off, it floated on, until a bend in the stream, half a mile down, hid it from the view of the watcher on the tree, who, for some reason, kept his eye upon it. Then his attention was called to the point, and he heard the cries of the party which he had sent down the Seneca, to come upon the two scouts from their rear. They were close at hand now, and the ambush on either side was alive with advanced rifles and muskets, prepared for the rush of the hunted men, which they felt sure would come. Soon came yells of disappointment and rage, and the painted fiends began to appear along the stream's edge. I-re-ton descended with an angry face and met two who were swimming over to the shore.

"Where is the Big Elk?" he thundered.

"Gone; jumped over the Seneca!" asserted the leading brave, with an expression which plainly told that he steadfastly believed Big Elk had jumped over the river.

"Big fool!" shouted I-re-ton. "Where did leave his canoe?"

"Cut canoe's bottom out," replied the brave.

"I-re-ton would doubtless have proceeded further with his questioning, when, from the river, half a mile below, they heard an echoing cry. Looking downward, they saw the two scouts wading the stream, which was very shallow at that point, holding their rifles high above their heads. The chorus of mad yells that burst from the Mohawks was truly deafening. It might well have appalled a stout heart, but to the scout, it was sport, for they had outwitted the wily foe; and their derisive cheers came back, making I-re-ton, as he afterwards expressed it, "*much* mad." Scarcely had the bushes hid the scouts from view than the Mohawks were busy. Their shrill calls brought those on the east of the river down

to the shore. The chief shouted some brief directions to them, and they dashed off at once, keeping well to the east. Those grouped about I-re-ton struck off into the wood, on the long lope peculiar to the savage; and the place which had been vocal with yells five minutes before, was left alone to the dead Mohawk. Signal-cries were heard, growing fainter and fainter, as the parties passed on down the stream. It was evident that I-re-ton was bound to give Ralph trouble, before he found shelter under the walls of Fort Ontario.

The scouts pushed on rapidly after they had landed from their submarine canoe. They knew the untiring vigor of their pursuers, and that they would not linger on their track. Until nightfall they hurried on through the forest. At this time they were in close proximity to "Little Falls," and the roar of the rapids sounded in their ears. Here they determined to rest, in spite of I-re-ton and his Mohawks. They knew well that he would be close upon them, but they doubted not their ability to outwit them on ground so well known to them. Passing rapidly down to the bank of the river, they built up a fire of light sticks, that gave out no smoke—a fire no larger than a man's hand, but still enough to broil a fish, which Ut-ta-wan scooped out of one of the shallow places in the rocks below the rapids, where it had fallen, and been unable to escape. This done, the companions feasted; then the fire was extinguished, and Ralph, leaning his back against the wall of rock beside him, slept as soundly as though a score of foes, hungry for his blood, were not creeping stealthily on his trail. The chief, lighting his pipe, sat down in the shadow of the rocks, listening for the slightest sound which might foretell the coming of the enemy. The breathing of the sleeping man was mingled with the roar of the torrent, dashing down among the rocks. The chief sat like a statue carved in bronze. One not knowing the nature of the man, would have said he slept. He never turned his head, but looked steadfastly out into the grim woods before him. Hours passed, and still he sat there, motionless. Then, when the morning was near at hand, he came stealthily to Ralph, and touched him on the arm.

"What is it, chief?" said Ralph.

"They are coming," was the quiet reply. "Let us go."

CHAPTER II.

THE RACE FOR SCALPS.

THE cry of the loon and owl were very frequent on both sides of the stream. This was what had led the chief to awaken the scout. It was the band of I-re-ton signaling each other. What gave Ut-ta-wan most uneasiness, was the fact that many of the cries came from *down* the river, and he knew that a party had struck it below.

Ralph arose at the summons, and looked out into the gloom. He, too, had been too long in the woods to be deceived; and he knew that the eleven miles through which they must pass would be full of danger.

"They are all along the river," said Ralph.

"Ugh!" grunted the chief.

"It will not do for us to go down-stream."

"No. What do den?"

"Let us cross the Lake Ne-ah-tah-wan-tah, and strike Ontario, two miles up. We will there find our canoe, and can then come down to the forts."

"Good," said the chief. "Brother's words are wise. Let us go."

Ne-ah-tah-wan-tah, as it is called to this day, is a beautiful little sheet in Oswego county, not far from Little Falls. The two adventurers set off, at a rapid pace, and the half-mile to the shore was soon passed. So often had they been forced to play hide-and-seek over this ground, that they had a canoe hidden by every stream or lake near Oswego. A hollow tree—a giant patriarch, which looked as though the hand of time had crowned him—gave up to them a birch canoe, rough, as if made some time when they were pressed by pursuers.

"You make dis?" said the chief, with a laugh. "No good canoe—squaw make better."

"I was in a hurry," replied the scout, apologetically, "and had not time to do it nicely. Never mind; it will answer our purpose."

They pushed off into the lake. The glassy surface was not disturbed by a ripple—only here and there a duck rose from the water with a startled cry. It was now gray morning, and the two bent to their paddles. The light craft, under the influence of their rapid strokes, fairly flew. They had no time for the beauties of the scene. With bloodthirsty foes behind them, they had no thought but to escape.

And yet, Ralph Warren was a true child of Nature, and loved the woods like an old friend. Since his kindred had fallen, the forest had indeed been home to him. He had lain for hours under the shadow of the trees, by this very lake, and watched the deer as they came down to drink; saw the brown bear go lumbering by; fought the grim panther in the coverts, and watched the myriad water-fowl skimming over the calm surface—duck and plover, and long-necked geese. He *loved* the woods; as the poet says of Byron, they were to him as brothers—

“Younger brothers, whom scarce as equals deemed.”

The passage was short to the other side. The canoe was drawn up among the ferns along the verge, and left, while the two, with trailed rifles, pressed on. They had not gone many rods when they knew that their plan to break their trail, and confuse their foes, had proved abortive. For a loud signal-call was heard, and soon the patter of feet, hurrying through the woods, told that the Mohawks had not been deceived. I-re-ton was too old a warrior. Divining that the hunted scouts would do something of the kind, he had sent two of his braves to the far side of the little lake, and it was these that were now in close pursuit, yelling as they ran, to call others to their aid.

“We must stop the mouths of their beagles,” said Ralph, between his teeth. The other understood him. Hatchet came out while he ran, looking over his shoulder. The patter of feet grew louder, for the scouts had slackened their pace, and were husbanding their strength for the contest. They crossed a little opening, dashed into the woods on the other side, and halted suddenly behind trees. A short space elapsed; then the pursuers broke cover, and rushed into the opening. Half-way across, what seemed a beam of light flashed from the bushes, and struck the foremost in the forehead. It was the

tomahawk of Ut-ta-wan, thrown with unerring aim; for the stalwart limbs of the Indian were soon stiffening in death.

The other paused irresolutely, but, hearing the yells of his gathering friends, he hurled his hatchet madly forward, and then, seeing that he had failed, drew his knife, and closed. The Onondaga caught the hatchet, as it clove the tree at his side, and, with the quickness of lightning, smote its fated owner in the center of the forehead, as, with uplifted knife, he rushed upon the chief. The Mohawk brave sunk to the earth, his head cleft almost in twain. Ut-ta-wan drew his knife, tore off the two scalps, thrust them into his belt, seized his favorite hatchet, pealed forth the scalp-cry, and joined his companion underneath the oak. For a mile they ran in silence, and then the cry which an Indian makes over the dead body of his friend broke upon their ears with startling earnestness. At the same time, the sun rose in the heavens, shedding a light that they did not care to see, knowing the tireless nature of their pursuers.

But they had put a mile between them and their foes, and hoped to confuse the now thoroughly enraged Mohawks before they came to their journey's end. Sometimes a grape-vine stretched across the path. Grasping this with both hands, they would swing out as far as they were able, and drop to the earth. They ran along the tops of fallen trees, and made long leaps from side to side, and, at last, reached a small creek, with a rocky bed. There they halted, and conferred a moment. Their enemy was close at hand.

"Chief," said Ralph, taking his hand, "we have been in many a fight together. It is time we knew each other. Now, we are in a tight place. We have government dispatches in our hands. Let us separate here, and try to get to the fort. One will escape—perhaps both; but probably only one. Who it will be, God above knows best. Now, will you go up or down the creek?"

The chief pressed his hand, without reply, and then dropping it, turned upward, walking in the shallow stream. The scout looked after the brave fellow, who thus took upon himself the greatest danger, with a moistened eye. But there was no time to lose, so, tightening his belt, he took the course down the stream. Like his friend, he made the water cover

his trail, but hurrying his steps, as he knew that the Mohawks were further down than up the creek, and one of them might strike the stream before he could pass. But Ralph had gained half a mile, when the Mohawks struck the creek, and they were stopped at once. The creek was before them, and they knew enough of woodcraft to be certain that the scouts would use it. Hitherto, the devices of the scouts had been lost upon their pursuers, who had followed them closely; but here was running water, and a bottom without sand. Every trace of the men they sought had disappeared. With angry cries, they ran up and down the banks, looking for a sign, but none was vouchsafed them, and they grouped together upon the brink for consultation. I-re-ton had done a very foolish thing. He had withdrawn every man from the *east* bank of the river, and, in this way, insured the safety of Abercrombie's dispatches.

The half-hour spent in the search and consultation, sufficed to bring Ralph to the spot where the creek emptied into the river. Running along the brink, to a place where heavy boughs overhung the water, he drew to the light the omnipresent canoe and paddles. With a chuckle of delight, he placed the trusty rifle in the bow, and took up a blade. Not knowing how many Indians might lurk along the shore, he took the middle of the stream. The Mohawks were not asleep, for the rifle-balls began to patter along the surface of the water, from the western bank. The scout answered by a shout of defiance, for he knew that the red-skins, with their clumsy muskets, were poor shots, at best, and that I-re-ton was not among them. He noted, too, that not a shot had been fired from the *eastern* bank. Taking advantage of this, and aided both by paddle and current he shot down the stream rapidly, and was soon far beyond their reach. The mae cries grew fainter and fainter in the distance, and the scout knew that he was safe.

Soon the first rapid was in sight, where the water glanced down among brown rocks, throwing the white foam high into the air. The canoe began to quiver like an aspen, and the current increased in velocity, but the stout voyager only grasped his paddle with a firmer hand, and bent his keen eye upon a dark line where the water ran smoothly among the

rocks. It seemed scarcely possible that he should be able to guide the canoe along that perilous way; but, avoiding the rocks by quick strokes, he was soon floating safely upon the smoother water below.

The post was now in sight. On the bluffs, on either side, the forts stood boldly out against the sky. The keel soon grated upon a sandy shore under the cliff, and the daring man, drawing the canoe well up on the land, to insure that it should not float out into the lake, shouldered his rifle, and walked boldly up toward the fortification. The sentry on the glacis brought him to a stand; but, recognizing the bold adventurer, allowed him to pass unquestioned. He walked quietly through the gate, and stood within the fort. It was a strong, bastioned work, with shot-proofs and shelters. To the right of the gate were the officers' quarters, an unpretentious stone building. Toward this he made his way, pausing to shake hands with those whom he met, and who greeted him warmly, and would have stopped him for news from the Capital. But he had no time for gossip, and pushed into the quarters. An orderly was lounging in the doorway. Ralph went into a room on the right, merely saying:

"Let the colonel know I have come in, Barnes."

"By Jove, Ralph, is that you? What's the news? Come, let a fellow know. We are dying for news here."

"Can't stop now, Barnes; got business with the commandant."

"I'll tell him. He has been looking for you, my boy, with all eyes; and, I guess he began to think that the Indians had snapped you up."

"They came very near it."

"What!" Barnes was startled out of his quietude. In truth, the orderly had a solemn prejudice against Indians generally. He was "not afraid of them," he used to inform his comrades, "but why could not the dirty beasts fight fair?" He would march out with any of them in line of battle, and take his chance for wounds or glory, but he had conscientious scruples against being shot from behind a tree, and ~~and~~ afterward.

"They nearly had me," asserted Ralph.

"The deuce they did! Where?"

"Just above the falls."

"Do you think they will attack the place?"

"Not these fellows. I am going to speak to the colonel, and have you take out a squad of men and clear them out of the woods. If you could get into an Indian fight, and kill one or two with your own hands, you would get to like it better."

"But I won't though; and you don't mean to get the colonel to send me out either."

Ralph had no intention of the kind. He was not the man to send any number of royal troops to fight Indians in the woods. A provincial himself, he had no faith in their prowess in wood-fights, and considered them as much out of their natural element as fish out of water. But Barnes was considerable of a braggadocio, and the scout delighted to bring him down. So the young provincial gave the soldier to understand that it would be a capital thing for him to go out into the woods and fight I-re-ton. The orderly waxed wroth, and relieved his feeling in words:

"Look here, Ralph Warren, this won't do. I told the colonel so. I said it was a pretty piece of work to bring a man of my style into this horrid wilderness and set down among these vile savages. Confound them, they have no more sense than to kill a man from behind a tree. I haven't liked it, and what's more, I don't mean to like it, no matter what I do, and"—

"In the mean time, Barnes, I am waiting to speak to Mr. Warren," said a quiet voice at his elbow.

Barnes shrunk back in dismay, for the colonel had heard their voices, and stood close beside the scout. Contenting himself with a single look at his terrified subaltern, the officer passed his arm through Ralph's, and led him into an inner room, closely locking and bolting the door behind. He placed a chair for his guest on one side of a long table, and seated himself on the other, saying in suppressed tones, "Now, then."

Ralph, without another word, drew from an inner pocket a silver ball and passed it to the colonel. He touched a spring, and drew out a crumpled bit of paper, and slowly spread it out upon the desk before him. It was not a long dispatch, probably not above a dozen lines in all; and yet the officer

sat there, with his elbows on the table, and his eyes fixed intently upon it, studying it as if life depended on the few words. Ralph eyed him compassionately across the table, for he knew how bitter disappointment, grief and anger were tearing at the great heart. At last he lifted his head, with a sigh which spoke of a fixed resolution, and began methodically folding the bit of paper, looking fixedly at the scout in the mean time. At last he said:

"You saw Abercrombie?"

"I did, sir."

"And *this* was his answer! *My God!* this was his answer! And what did he *say* to you? He knew your cool head and cautious judgment would not be the first to take alarm—that you would never have told him of the great danger menacing us unless you knew it to be so. What *said* he to you?"

"In effect, that he did not believe a word I said. I told him that the French were gathering a great expedition at Montreal against some post on the lake, doubtless Oswego. I told him what good means I had of knowing—that Ut ta-wan and myself had been among them, even; but he laughed at the idea of invasion as womanish and absurd. He declined to take any action whatever until the arrival of the Earl of Loudon. By that time Montcalm or Moran will be upon us."

"I fear so. Loudon should be on hand. But all this is idle talk. I am instructed to make what preparations I deem necessary, in case the French *should* make an attack upon the post, and hold it until the last. This I will do. Further than that, I am not responsible. Did you meet with any difficulty coming up?"

"That red renegade, I-re-ton, pressed me hard, and I fear for Ut ta-wan. He parted from me at Six-Mile creek, and broke for the lake. I have delivered my message, and now go out to save him if I can."

"You will take a company of the Rifles out with you?"

"No, sir; let me pick twelve men from C company, of the major's battalion, and I will give you a good account of I-re-ton if I meet him."

"The major! ah," said the other, with a smile. "You *will* want to see the major, and somebody else." The brave fellow flushed for a moment like a girl.

"Come out quickly, and we will see what can be done for the Indian. There are no ten men in the fort to-day, except yourself, whom I would change him for."

The two passed out into the open air, and up to the parapet of the fort. From this they had a fair view of the woods around. The fort stood in the center of a little opening which the busy axes had hewn out from the forest, perhaps twenty or thirty acres in all. They were looking anxiously outward when the crack of a rifle saluted their ears, and with it a defiant whoop. So suddenly had it followed their appearance that they thought the shot aimed at them; but the next moment Ralph shouted:

"There spoke the chief. The old boy kicks yet. Ha, there he comes!"

He pointed with his hand. Down the shore of the lake, upon the pebbles and flat rocks which lined it, ran a single man, hard followed by three others. He was running fully at ease, as could be plainly seen by those in the fort, who were looking on with palpitating hearts.

"By Jupiter," said Ralph, "if he isn't towing them into the fort. A hundred to twenty he turns on them at the three trees!"

"By the powers, but d'ye see the blagguard run?" cried an Irish sergeant. "Arrah, me lad, but ye do yer work well. Chest well out, an' goin' well from the thighs. Ah, ye beauty, but that run would make the fortune of ye at Donnybrook."

"Are they not gaining on him?" questioned the colonel, in a low tone.

"Yes, and he lets them. Now, I know that fellow well enough to tell you that he could come into the fort before they could get to the two trees. But the rascal covets scalps, as Pat Mooney there covets potheen."

"Arrah, ye baste, don't slander me wid yer talk. Where wud I get potheen in this haythen counthry, to be sure?"

"As I was saying, when he gets to the three trees he will expect me to be with him, and so here goes." As he spoke, the brave scout sprung over the parapet, slid down into the ditch, clambered up to the glacis, and ran toward the trees, with his rifle poised in his ready hands. "Let him pass," shouted the commandant to the sentry on the glacis, who had

pointed his gun at him. The fellow recovered arms, and well for him he did so, for the scout would most certainly have knocked him down. Halting a few paces beyond, he dropped upon one knee, threw forward his rifle, and looked keenly at the coming chase. About forty paces behind the chief, ran a hideously-painted savage, brandishing his hatchet for a throw. The rifle of Ralph came slowly to his eye; a puff of white smoke was followed by the whip-like rifle-crack; the pursuer bounded into the air, dead before he touched the ground. The Indians had no rifles—only tomahawks and knives. When they saw the “Big Elk” drop his man, and then leap forward to the aid of his friend, they paused, looked at him irresolutely, and then dashed into the woods on the left. The chief would have followed, but the other seized his arm.

“Come back chief; you will get into an ambush. How did you escape?”

“Got long legs—run very fast. See dis?”

He pointed to a fresh scalp in his belt.

“Got *nudder* scalp. Make *four*. Dat do for *one* day. guess. Go now into big wigwam. Tired and hungry. Mus have rest.”

The two turned and ran toward the fort, pursued by dropping shots from others of I-re-ton's gang who had come up. At the gate they were met by a company of the Rifles, under the lead of a puffy, red-faced captain, as fair a specimen of the genuine John Bull as one would wish to see. A man who knew himself to be—and wished others to understand that he was—*Captain John H. Brown*, of His Majesty's Rifles.

“Now where are *you* going?” queried Ralph, much in the tone in which one would address a school-boy.

“I, young man? I am about to charge into yonder thicket, and drive those howling savages away. It is not fit that his Majesty's fort should be put in a state of siege by such persons.”

“Colonel,” shouted the scout, “you certainly have not sent him on such an expedition? They will have his scalp, and the scalps of a dozen good men besides in less than five minutes.”

“He was sent out to help you, if necessary. Having no need of his services, he will now return.”

"But, colonel," expostulated the captain, "only let me charge once. Those wretches will never stand up to it."

"Of course they won't. More fools if they would. But if you think that such a thicket as that is the place for a bayonet charge, all I can say is, you have very little knowledge of your business. That jungle would be your winding-sheet."

"What do you mean, fellow?"

"Just what I say, fellow," answered Ralph, mimicking the tone of the other, with whom he was constantly at swords' points, and had not the fear of his Majesty, in the person of Captain John Brown, before his eyes. Passing him with a contemplative glance, the scout passed into the fort. As he did so, a noble-looking officer, in the undress uniform of a major, fastened on his arm.

"Glad to see you, Major Bowen. Did you see me finish off that Indian?"

"Yes, my lad. How have you been? You look well."

"I am all right."

"Come into quarters. You have not seen Clara, and have been in an hour. For shame! what a tardy lover you are."

Ralph laughed, and followed him into the stone house. Passing up a flight of stairs, they entered a room on the second floor. A girl, seated at the window, rose at their entrance, and came toward them with extended hands. Ralph took them in his, and gave them a silent pressure. He did not drop them at once, but stood holding one in his own hard palms.

"I heard you had come in, Ralph."

The reader need not wonder at the familiarity of the two. Ralph was the plighted lover of Clara Bowen.

Clara was beautiful; a brunette, finely formed, with dark hair and eyes, sweet in temper, a devoted daughter, and ardent in her attachment to the bold scout. To Ralph she was not only beautiful, but all that was true woman, and he loved her with all the fervor of his great heart.

"Oh! Ralph," she said, "I have been waiting for you, and am so glad you have come. Why do you follow this terrible life?"

"Because I can not help it, Clara. You do not know how I have come to love it. I can lie down at night under the

shadow of a cataract, and look up into the realm of stars above my head and bless God for such a world as this of ours. I lead a wild, and perhaps, dangerous life. But, I have come to look on life as uncertain, and death may find me anywhere. So let us say no more of my way of living, Clara, until it is God's will I should choose another."

"You have been to Albany," broke in the major. "Come come, let Ralph's way of living alone. It is well enough, Clara, although I still wish he had taken the proffered lieutenantancy in my battalion of the Rifles."

"I should have been under Brown," replied Ralph, dryly, "and *that* is enough! And, as for what I saw at Albany, it is easily told. I saw Abercrombie, and he did not care to help us; that Loudon did not come; that my word, the word of a man who never failed them, was doubted for that of a Mohawk, who afterward followed me all the way from Albany, and tried his best to get my scalp."

"Ralph!"

"I can't help it, Clara. I will say what I think, and that is that I have been used unjustly. They always do so with us provincials. And I tell you, Clara, and you Major Bowen, that they will send over fellows from home who will crowd the provincials, until they drive them even to take the sword in self-defense."

"You can hardly mean it?" whispered the major, with a horrified look.

"But I do, though. I tell you, that they will drive this people to rebel. They are a brave people and loyal, but they will never be trampled upon and scorned by any power."

"You are young, Ralph, and your blood is hot; for this reason I must regard with leniency your expressions. What you are saying is treason. And now, not that I think such a time ever will come, what would you do in case these provinces did rebel?"

The form of the young man straightened up proudly, and his eye dilated, as he replied:

"You know me to be a man whose love for the place of his birth is a part of his very soul. I love old England, but should she oppress the land where I first drew my breath, I could be her bitter foe."

"You are vexed now, dear Ralph," said Clara. "You do not believe that this time will ever come."

"Pray God it never may, Clara. And yet I tell you, that I fear it *will* come, and that, too, in this generation. What stuff do they think we are made of? There already is a tendency to load parliamentary taxes upon the people. The provinces will never submit, because it is gross extortion. My father's property lies idle, because I have not time to work it. But, the taxes I pay are enormous; and with my limited means, it is a constant struggle to keep it out of the grasp of the harpies of the crown."

"If your prophecy comes true in my day, Ralph Warren, I shall be found fighting for my king. I have served him faithfully too long to desert him now. I will always support lawful authority in every case."

"Will you also support extortion and injustice? No. I know you will *not*, for it is not your nature to do so. When the time comes, and you have been tried, you can tell better where you will be."

"Enough of this; you have not told me what you think of our position. Let us talk of that."

And the three drew their chairs together and sat long into the day, laying plans for the future. Tattoo for dinner found them still there. Then, in the afternoon, they went out upon the parapet of the fort looking out upon the lake, which lay in peaceful glory below them. Ralph lifted his hand and pointed outward:

"Wait two weeks, and you shall see yonder lake black with ships and bateaux, bearing the French against us. Mark my word: the French, under Montcalm, will take Oswego, and level your forts with the ground. That will be the only **wakening** of the dolts at Albany. We shall see.

CHAPTER III.

THE FOE, THEY COME!

Time passed pleasantly enough in the forts for a few days. To have seen the careless throngs of soldiers lounging about the quarters, the gay groups of officers and their ladies upon the parades, the canoes flying over the tranquil water of the harbor, or far out upon the lake, would have dreamed that the peaceful spot would soon be the theater of fierce and bloody strife. Sometimes a graceful deer would come down to the edge of the few acres of opening along the shore, and look out at the crowd with mildly curious eyes, until a shout, or the bullet of some careless hunter, sent him crashing through the bushes, or perhaps laid him dead in his native woods.

The scouts had gone out together, and had been gone some days. Clara began to fear for the safety of her lover; as what girl would not, who loved truly? Every day she would go up to the parapet, and look out into the thick woods that walled her in on every side. Her father was at ease in regard to Ralph. He knew his perfect woodcraft, joined with that of his red friend, would be more than a match for the wiles of any common foe; and that he must be a bold and brave, as well as cunning man, to circumvent them. Only *his* looks were more anxiously cast over the lake. There lay the danger to the garrison. That Montcalm would attempt to secure the post he knew; but how soon? The scout had said, within two weeks, and now over ten days were past.

While they were watching, one day, the scout came in alone. He was travel-stained and weary, and never turned to the right or left, but went straight to the colonel's quarters. He was closeted with that officer; and then, armed as he was, without rest, the tireless man went forth again. He met Clara in the hall, and a quiet hand-pressure, a fervent lover's kiss passed between them. She knew he was going out, to

what sad fate she could only imagine; but, she was not one to stop him in the path of duty. Before he plunged into the woods, he turned once to look at *her*, who now stood on the parapet and waved a parting to him. That her pure love made him stronger and better, in the struggle of life, we may well infer.

No one knew where he had been or where he now went except the commandant. Let us follow him along the shore, treading lightly and with cautious foot upon the rocks, and peering into every thicket, choosing paths where the leaves lay as they had lain, since a last year's frost had taken them from the parent bough. As he passed on his thoughts shaped themselves thus:

"Montcalm is on the wing. I know it, for I saw him at Niagara. By this time that swift schooner has set him down at Bay Quinte. He will be over to-day, and I must see that we don't take us napping. I don't know how many men he has, but, if he does come, he will come strong. Moran is with him. There is more man about him than Montcalm; I have fought them both, and I know it. I wonder where the chief is? He promised to meet me at this point. Ah!"

He dropped suddenly to the earth, crawling like a snake along the ledge under whose face he had been walking. It was a timely act, for a band of men, of what kind he knew not, had come out upon the face of the cliff above his head. He had heard their footsteps just in season to hide.

"The great war-chief is on his way, then?" said a voice which the scout knew to be that of the Mohawk I-re-ton, who was speaking in his usual heavy tone. The reply came smooth and oily, and that voice he knew as well, and was seized with an unutterable longing to take him by the throat. It was one of those men through whose means the border of New York witnessed so many scenes of cruel massacre—a French Jesuit! The power of these evil-minded men over their Indian converts was wonderful. They made their way into every tribe, and, with craft equaled only by that of the great author of evil, they wormed their way into the confidence of chief and brave, winning thousands to the side of the French. By this means, the tribes of the north-west more than once were united against the English. The conspiracy

of Pontiac, and the Chicago and Michilinackinac massacres, were their work. The Iroquois alone, of all the tribes, they had not been able to cajole; and yet, there were some men, like the renegade I-re-ton, who had been *converted*, and were willing instruments for evil to the Frenchmen.

"Yes, my son," said the Jesuit, in answer to the question. "The marquis is on his way; I am looking for his sails every hour."

"The Yengees shall be swept from the face of the earth," said the exultant warrior. "I myself shall hear them howl for mercy. They will cry to me in vain. I shall dip my hatchet in the blood of the 'Big Elk,' and the 'Eagle.' Shall it not be so, my father?"

"You say that these two men have done you wrong; is it enough wrong to let them die for? If not—"

"They have taken the scalps of our braves, and made many widows in our lodges; my people howl for their blood. They say, 'Give these men to us.' They have done *me* wrong, and they shall die if they fall into my hands. They shall bear the torment of fire."

"The chief says well," replied the oily priest. "They have done him great wrong, but, the great father would give many blankets, and muskets, powder and ball, for the 'Big Elk,' and the 'Eagle.'"

"I hate the Big Elk," continued I-re-ton. "I have sworn to wear his scalp in my belt. There is a young squaw in the big wigwam of the Yengees whom he loves. Her eyes are like the stars in the clear nights, and her voice like the music of running waters. She shall see the 'Big Elk' die, and then go into my wigwam. She shall be the squaw of a great chief."

Ralph set his teeth so hard that he feared they might hear. He longed to get this fiend once more within range of his rifle, but, the chief, unconscious of the vicinity of his foe, talked on.

"Will my father promise me that the white squaw shall be mine?"

"She shall be yours if you are faithful," was the answer.

"Will my father go down upon the shore now?"

"Yes," replied the other. "Let us go."

The scout looked about him in dismay. On one side

the cliff arose like a wall. A move to the right or left would expose him to their view. While he pondered, a red hand was thrust out from among some vines into which he had pressed his body, and touched him on the arm. Looking downward, he saw the face of Ut-ta-wan peering out at him from among the leaves. In an instant, they parted, and he dropped into a natural cavern in the face of the rock, worn out by the force of the waves. He had just time to press the hand of his red friend, when the enemy came down upon the beach. They had increased in number to nearly forty, and with them was the cowed and shaven wretch who had aroused the ire of Warren by the manner in which he had disposed of Clara. With an involuntary movement he threw forward his rifle, making a rustling among the leaves. I-re-ton looked sharply about, but, just then, a squirrel sprung out of a nook in the rock, and leaped upward. Attributing the noise to him, the Mohawk resumed the conversation, while from their covert, the imprisoned scouts glared upon the foe. There is, perhaps, no more appalling spectacle, than an Indian in his war-paint. The chief, I-re-ton, stood so near the scouts that either could have touched him with his rifle. He was a tall, wiry man, with the facial angles of a hyena, made fiercer by his somber paint, striped here and there with dark red, and white bars across the naked breast. The party cast themselves down upon the beach like men who meant to wait, and the conversation went on.

"Why do you hate the 'Big Elk?'" It was the Jesuit who spoke. For answer the chief turned full upon him, threw aside his blanket, and lifted his left arm to a level with the face of his questioner. For the first time he saw that the chief was without a hand!

"Does my father see this?" he asked, in a tone of concentrated bitterness, which thrilled the heart of his listener. "It was years ago when that went, and then I swore to the Great Spirit that I would have the scalp of the one who did it to hang in my belt. And I swore never to bury the hatchet in any war until this was so."

"How was it done? What has all this to do with the 'Big Elk?' My son is in a fog."

"Let my father look at it closely, and tell me how it was done?"

The Jesuit looked closely at the maimed member. "It was done with a bullet first," he said, "and after that, cut off with a sharp instrument."

"My father is right. He is always right. And now he shall know who did it. It was years ago, upon the Mohawk. The father of the Big Elk was living there with his son and squaw. The Mohawks wanted scalps, and one night they took them. But the Big Elk killed two braves who would have stopped him, and fled. His eyes can see in the dark. He saw the chief by the light of the burning wigwam. The chief heard his rifle, and a bullet splintered the bone. The medicine-men said it must come off. That is the reason I hate the Big Elk."

"I, too, hate the man," said the Jesuit, the evil in him glaring from his eyes. "He has been a scourge to my nation. Not an expedition could we plan to drive the heretics down to the pit, but he knows it, and tells it to his friends. He, and that red scoundrel whom you call Eagle, and who is known to us as Ut-ta-wan, have done more harm to the cause of France in these regions than Abercrombie ever will. I would like to take him a prisoner to Quebec, if I could, but I will keep my word with you."

"Got long tongue, Big Elk. Talk, talk to war-chief at Albany (Abercrombie), an' tell him dat French come to take Oswàgo. Big fool, dat war-chief. I-re-ton tole him dat 'Big Elk' tell lie. French t'ink Yengees goin' to try take Quebec or Montreal, an' so him not send dat time any more men to Oswàgo."

"Then you saw Warren at Albany?"

"See him dere. Long tongue, tell you. Git very mad at war-chief an' come back. Try to catch him on Seneca, but him swim under water like fish, and get way. Nex time me catch him, take him scalp, sure."

"How did he escape you?"

"Don't know, *sure*. Git 'way somehow. Den we chase, and dey kill five, six warrior, take four scalp, very bad; sorry dat Eagle got so many scalp."

Ut-ta-wan almost chuckled in his den among the leaves. How well it pleased him that his enemy knew he had taken

scalps, it is impossible to say. Certain it is, that only the knowledge of the danger it would bring on Ralph, restrained him from essaying the taking of another scalp at once. But to tell the truth, they were in a very precarious situation, and something very like dismay settled on their faces, as they saw the Indians light a fire and begin to roast venison. They were forced to guard against every movement, lest it should betray their whereabouts to their foes. Looking out of the covert, they could see the grim savages grouped about the fire, gnawing the savory venison with their white teeth.

All at once there arose a great clamor, and they saw their adversaries running down the beach. What could it mean? The scout thrust his head out of the cavity and watched. He saw them pointing up the lake and shouting. Something evidently had occurred.

Not a man was left at the camp-fire. Crawling slowly out, the two crept silently up to the point which hid the Indians from their view. They now plainly saw what it was that had roused the tumult. A great fleet of schooners and bateaux were upon the lake, bearing down upon the land. The tri-color flaunted from every mast, and the rowers were humming a Canadian boat-song. On the prow of the stanchest schooner stood Montcalm, with his leading officers grouped about him. The scouts grasped their rifles, and looked at one another. Here was the scourge of their borders in their power. It needed only a fine-drawn bead, and good-bye to earth for him. The impulse was momentary only, and then Ralph struck up the extended piece of his friend, whose conscience would not have troubled him had he shot the French marquis then and there.

"Go to the garrison with this news," said Ralph.

The Indian did not wait for further orders; but tightening his belt, and turning a farewell look on his friend, he climbed the cliff and bounded away. Then all at once rose a shriller clamor—greater than had hailed the coming of the French, for I-re-ton's braves had seen their foe and started in pursuit. Ralph got into his covert in great haste, knowing that he could be of no use to the Onondaga now. He heard the pattering of the runners' feet along the cliff; their yells died away, and then he cautiously came out upon the shore.

The French were busy. Bayonets and swords gleamed in the sun's rays, and all the pomp and circumstance of war was before him. First, the Indians, born of the water and land, sprung nimbly out upon the beach, and scattered along it, tightening bow-strings, sharpening knives and hatchets, and picking the flints of muskets. They were Hurons, nearly all though Ralph, who knew the paint, could see that there were many of other tribes among them. Then came the regulars, and chose a place for a camp. This done, they set to work to land the guns.

Ralph shrugged his shoulders when these came in sight. Little hope was there for Oswego after those great guns were planted, for they were larger than any the fort could boast, and against them the English would fight in vain. Howitzers and small guns there were without number, but how to work against the giants they were landing was Ralph's only thought.

Some of the Indians were beginning to move down toward the spot where he stood, and he returned to his hole. He had had no rest for many nights, and, lying down on the hard rock, forgetful of Indians and Frenchmen, dreaming of her, he fell asleep. Fearless of danger, in the midst of a hostile camp, with the rifle which had done him such good service resting on his arm, he slumbered soundly, yet so lightly, that a breath might have broken his repose.

CHAPTER IV.

EAGLE EYE'S RUSE AND BAD NEWS.

THE Onondaga ran like a hunted deer. Probably there was not one in the band who could compete with him if he had not been worn down by fatigue. But, even now, he was a wily and dangerous foe, running at ease, at times looking over his shoulder, to satisfy himself of the whereabouts of his enemies. There were two miles between him and the forts; but an unforeseen obstacle was in his path, otherwise he

would have had no trouble in coming safely in. This was in the shape of a band of Mohawks, who were coming up from below to join the French. No sooner did he hear them calling to each other than he ran down a steep bank to the shore, and out upon a platform of rock, from which he had a fair view of the cliff.

The Indians gathered from every side, and presently I-re-ton, with half a dozen of his men, made his appearance upon the rock above. He uttered a cry of joy, even while the rifle of the Onondaga was pointed at his heart.

"What does the renegade Mohawk here?" demanded the haughty warrior.

"He is here," replied I-re-ton, "to ask the Eagle Eye to give himself up into his hands. What hope is there for the Eagle of the Onondaga? Let him look to the rising sun; my warriors are there. Let him look to the setting sun; behold they are there. Let him look to the north; *I am here!*"

The chief, returning his rifle to a rest, folded his arms upon his stalwart breast and laughed. He looked like a forest king standing there, and his clear laugh ringing out upon the air. He would have laughed at the stake just the same.

"Does the Eagle yield? We have brave tortures for him."

"I spit on your tortures!" was the reply.

"My young men are ready, and they long to light the fires about him; to dim his eyes, and hear the death-cry of a great chief."

"The Mohawks are snakes that crawl in the grass; they are dust in the eyes of a warrior." A hundred times have I gone out to battle, and each time has my hatchet drank of their blood. Why should I yield to them now?"

"Is my brother a fish, that he should swim away? And, if he could, are not my young men before him?"

He was right. A canoe lay resting calmly upon the lake, a few yards from the shore, just visible in the twilight, for it was now growing dusk. Again the chief laughed.

"If the renegade wants me, let *him* come and take me!" As he spoke he suddenly threw forward his rifle, and, when the others, who dropped to the earth or dodged behind the cliff until the bullet whistled above them, again appeared, the Onondaga was not to be seen! Vanished, they knew not

how, into the solid rock ! With mad cries, they plunged down the slope, certain that he lay hidden behind some of the giant boulders scattered here and there ; but he was not to be found. His rifle, indeed, lay where he had dropped it, but *he* was not there.

In a transport of rage they ran round the platform, making the air vocal with their cries. Where had he gone ? Through the rock upon which he had stood ran a cleft about four feet wide, filled with the clear, translucent water. They leaped this and ran out upon the verge, and peering over, half expected to see his body lying upon the pure white sand. But he was not there. They looked along the shore, and then reluctantly gave up the search, certain that their enemy was dead, but angry that they had not the scalp. The last man, as he ascended the cliff, looked back, and, lo ! the Indian stood upon the platform, shouting his war-cry. That the Mohawks were astonished, it is needless to say. That they came down upon him in a body, is equally certain. That they could not find him, an undoubted fact.

Indians are naturally superstitious. The repeated disappearance of the chief was unaccountable, even to more active minds. The simple Indians looked upon it as the work of a spirit. It ran around the circle that the chief was "Great Medicine," and, as such, they would fare badly in searching for him. But I-re-ton, their ruling spirit, declared that Eagle Eye was hidden near at hand, and that they must find him.

But, where to look ? Ten minutes before, he stood upon the brink of the cleft ; now, no vestige of his presence remained. The group gathered in a knot, and talked earnestly. The party in the canoe paddled to the shore, leaving it afloat beside the rock. Ten minutes were spent in fruitless talk, and when they turned to look for their canoe, lo, it was gone !

If they were angry before, they were furious now. They leaped up and down upon the rocks, and called upon the chief, by every opprobrious epithet, to come out and show himself. But he was proof against their efforts, and obstinately failed to appear. They watched all night, and then, confident that he had been spirited away by the unseen powers of air—of which the Indian ever stands in fear and awe—they made their way back to the camp of Montcalm.

Scarcely were they out of sight, when the prow of a canoe might have been seen slowly emerging from the water, just before the platform. It was the lost craft of I-re-ton, and the motive power was Ut-ta-wan, whose brown head and shoulders followed immediately, an expression of intense enjoyment resting on his bronze features. In a moment more, he dragged himself out upon the rock. When I-re-ton lost sight of him at first, he had simply dropped down into the cleft before mentioned, and the water closed over him. Under that platform of rock—now called the "Jib," by the people of the place—was a cavern, not entirely filled with water. In an idle hour, while swimming around the rock, the chief had found out this freak of nature.

[To this day—although the cavity is rapidly filling up, and the rock has sunk lower, so that no air can penetrate—the youth swim under the "Jib," and are completely hidden from those above them for a moment.]

The entrance was at the level of the bottom, twelve feet below, and the swimmer rose into the hollow chamber, which was ventilated by means of holes cut into the outer face by the young scout, some time before. They recognized, at once, the excellence of the place as an asylum when hard pressed. The two men had taken pains to convey to the place spare rifles, with an abundance of ammunition, and a considerable amount of provisions. There was another opening on the lake side, which the scouts had often made use of, in order to hide their canoe.

When the chief sunk from sight, he rose slowly to the surface, and applied his ear to one of the holes before mentioned. He could hear the muffled footsteps, as they trampled to and fro, and their astonished exclamations came to his ears. Then he heard them go away, and, swimming out of the larger opening, he climbed over the edge, and was seen by the last Indian, as before described. He plunged in again, and was safe in his strange haunt. Looking out upon the lake, he saw the men in the canoe paddling to the shore. As good fortune would have it, they landed upon the rock, and joined the others in their search. This was the moment for the chief; so, swimming out, he laid his hand upon the gunwale of the little craft, and dragged it under the outer opening,

leaving it lying upon the pebbly bottom. He had now a way of escape, when the enemy retired from the shore, which would leave him in no danger of being waylaid. As soon as he was sure they were gone, he came out, righted the canoe, and paddled away toward the fort, which he reached in good time.

He met Clara on the parade; her mild eyes questioned him, saying: "What have you done with your friend?" The Indian knew that the brave scout loved her, and so she was very dear to him, as well.

"Where is Ralph?" she said.

"Let' him, las' night."

"Was he in danger?"

"S'pose so. Always danger, mos' times. Ralp' much brave—no care."

"Was he in any immediate danger?"

"What 'mediate be?"

"What was he doing?"

"Oh, him scouting, den."

"Why did you leave him?"

"Him say: 'Run to fort, chief, an' tell fader dat French come.' Him stay fur scout. Mus' go now, tell ole fader."

Clara let him pass. Although herself consumed with anxiety for the safety of her friend, she knew that it was very necessary that the colonel should know all, at once. He passed on into the commandant's quarters, pausing to exchange a rough greeting with Sergeant Pat Mooney, between whom and himself a strange liking was growing up. Pat liked him because, as he said: "The ould varmint was afraid of nothing at all," and Ut-ta-wan liked the "Irisher," as he called him, for his off-hand kindness, and genuine good-nature. Hardly had the Onondaga passed five minutes with the colonel, when he rushed out in hot haste, and rapid drum-beats called the soldiers to quarters. The speech of the officer was prompt and to the point. Five thousand French and Indians threatened them. They would fight, not alone for their own lives, but for the lives of their wives and children. For he feared that, if they fell into their hands, few would escape death by torture. He referred them to the numberless instances of pitiless massacre in the annals of Indian warfare, and showed

them that they had nothing better to hope for, in case they yielded, than a cruel death. There was little said by the men; but side glances, cast at the white faces of their loved ones, and the hard-set teeth, told that they were not only ready, but eager to beat back the bloodthirsty wretches who craved their scalps.

Long before noon, the skirmishers of the French began to appear along the edge of the woods, and many shots were sent into the embrasures. The fort remained silent, for ammunition was too precious to be wasted upon an enemy not yet fully seen.

The morning was spent in casual firing; but the wily Montcalm was working with all his power, aided by the skill and energy of his friend, Moran, upon the heavy batteries.*

The most powerful of these was situated at the point mentioned in the note, while another, scarcely less powerful, stood upon the lake shore, a few rods from the bank. In both of these the Frenchman mounted heavy guns, which done, he sent an aide to demand the surrender of the fort.

The young messenger sauntered easily across the open space, striking off clover-tops with his stick, as if unconscious that a thousand muskets were grinning at him over the parapet. He held the truce-flag slightly advanced, and the firing ceased along their line. As he approached the huge gate, it swung slowly back, and the messenger was admitted into the fort. It was a formidable one for the age and place; not such a finished work of art as the defenses of our harbors of to-day, but a strong earthwork, backed by moat and abattis, with its twenty-pounders looking grim defiance at the enemy over the walls. The soldiers stood grouped about the guns; the matches were burning, and piles of balls were heaped near by, with canister and grape. The young man glanced coolly about him, as he was led into the presence of the commandant, who, with the stately courtesy of the day, welcomed him. He listened to the demand for surrender quietly, and as quietly refused to accede to the terms, which were unconditional surrender. "He could not think," he said, "of sur-

* The remains of these earthworks were to be seen until they were leveled, a few years back, as the site of a great factory; and flint arrow heads, solid shot, and the like, were thrown up from the earth about it.

rendering his Majesty's post without, at least, one good blow. All that he had said, in reference to the force of his General, might be strictly true—was so, undoubtedly, both from his word and the reports of his scouts, who had some time before made him acquainted with their force and design." He pointed out his men, thirsting for the battle, some of them stripped to the waist, and bending over their guns. The aide painted in glowing colors the horrors of an Indian massacre, and how impossible it would be for the whites to restrain them, if they were forced to take the place by assault; but the Englishman was firm, and the young man took his leave, protesting that he washed his hands of the matter.

Just as he went away, he said, casually: "By the way, colonel, we have one of those scouts of yours, who give you such good information. He was taken last night."

"What scout, sir?"

"The man who has given us more trouble than all your Rifles put together, who roams the country in company with yonder Onondaga."

Ut-ta-wan leaned forward, drinking in every word.

"You seem to know him?"

"I think I do. *Ciel!* They took me prisoner once, when I was taking dispatches from Frontenac to Crown Point. I had pressed safely through to the Horicon, and prided myself on the promotion that was sure to come, when, *scélérats*, they were upon my back!"

"What will be done with him?" asked Major Bowen, hoarsely.

"Done, *mon ami?*" said the Frenchman, turning quickly upon him, and taking him by the button; "he was taken within our lines as a spy—as a spy! mind you. I would not give a *sou* for his life."

"He will be executed?"

"Without doubt, sir."

"Could I see him?"

"I doubt it. Montcalm is sorely vexed at him, and he says that he must be closely watched."

At this moment the Onondaga came up, and made a gesture of impatience.

"My brother is going?"

"He is, Eagle Eye. You have not changed much since I had the pleasure of meeting you on the Horicón."

"Got you *dat* time. S'pose we use you bad, no giv' you 'nuff to eat, nor nuffin?"

"You treated me like a prince, and I promised to remember it."

"S'pose you take 'dis to Big Elk, 'den."

The chief held out a small round ivory ball, with curious carvings upon it. The Frenchman looked at it suspiciously, turning it from side to side.

"No be 'fraid, won't bite," said the chief.

"Do you give me your words that this ball is not some trick to get him out?"

"Bin wid Big Elk long time. One day fine two bones like dat. Medicine, very great medicine! Charm! Mus' promise to take it to Big Elk, else not send; wait till major go. When he see dat he know Onondaga nebber leave him."

"I will promise. It makes very little difference, as he dies so soon. Yes, I will take it."

"Let me go with him," now pleaded Major Bowen with his commandant, "and see what I can do for the poor fellow. Consider, colonel, that he is the betrothed husband of my child, and I dare not go to her and tell her that he dies in the morning."

"Go," replied the colonel. "Take the flag with you, and offer Captain Du Plessis for Ralph. I doubt not the exchange may be made."

Montcalm's aide shook his head: "You are over sanguine, sir. Montcalm will never set him free, now that he has him safe. I myself heard him say that he must die, beyond a doubt, and Montcalm never goes aside from his word."

"How will he die?"

"That is as it happens; perhaps by cord or bullet, perhaps by the Indians; who knows? They took him, and if they choose to demand him, Montcalm will have to give him up. They hate him with a deadly hatred."

"Break the news to her when I am gone, colonel," gasped Bowen. "It will be easier to tell her if I fail."

The colonel would have marched at the head of his regiment against a battery sooner than undertake the commission, but, he could not refuse. The two passed out together,

proceeding at once to the *marquéé* of Montcalm, whom they found seated at a table looking over a plan of the fortification, in company with his adviser, Moran. Both rose as the messenger and the English major entered, and the plan was folded, and laid aside.

"You have come to surrender the post, major?"

"I have not, sir. Your aide will give you my commanders's views on that subject."

"What is it, Perrie," said the marquis, sharp and quick.

"He will not yield."

"The blood be upon his own head, then. But I will make one more effort, for I do not wish to let my Indians loose upon you, as I must do if you continue stubborn. Come with me, major, and I will show you with what you are contending. You must know the strength of my army."

He took the arm of the major, and they passed out of the tent, accompanied by Moran and Perrie. They halted in a natural clearing in the rear of the French works. The drums were beating for parade, and battalion after battalion was coming into the space. The major's soldier-eye roamed over the bristling line of the French, saw the clock-like precision of their movements, and he could not refrain from giving an exclamation of pleasure at their soldierly appearance. The face of the marquis flushed with pride. A soldier himself, he knew the value of appreciation from an enemy, and that enemy a soldier as well. He saw the quick start; and the eager tone in which the major said "Good!" did not escape his ears. These troops were the darlings of his own creation; the men whom, under his own eye, he had seen well drilled and officered, and who afterward nearly wrested victory from the grasp of Wolfe upon the memorable "Plains of Abraham."

"You admire them, sir; and you do well, for a better drilled set of men, or a braver, do not tread American soil to-day. You see here a part of our force, and now—"

He gave some quick order to one of his aides; it flashed down the lines from mouth to mouth, and the glittering ranks fell away to the rear. At the same time, a rattle and confused din fell upon the ear coming from the forest around. Louder it grew, and then a long line of dusky warriors, with bared hatchets and shouldered muskets, filed slowly into the glade,

glaring savagely at the major, whose hated scarlet coat they knew at once. They were chanting a savage war-song, a wild symphony, which in our language is nothing, but in theirs, terrible. Let the reader imagine over two thousand Indians in their war-paint, crowned with the many hideous devices with which an Indian loves to adorn himself before battle, and you have some idea of the scene as it appeared to the major. The many voices, harsh and vindictive, smote on the ear with something like a prophecy of evil and horror.

"Hoo-hoo!

We are coming, we are coming,

See, see!

Our hatchets are dug from the ground;

We have painted our faces for war;

We are ready, we are ready,

We are eager for War!

Our knives are sharp and keen,

And our muskets are true to their aim.

We scent the blood of the Englishman;

We hate him as the snake that crawls;

We will trample him under our feet;

He shall die in his great wigwam,

He and all of his kin.

See, see!

We have taken many scalps,

But we smell the blood of a thousand;

The warriors shall be slain,

But the women shall plant our corn

And keep warm the lodges of brave men."

Major Bowen's heart grew sick as the ranks of those human fiends went by, glaring at him through their paint. He saw, too, the utter hopelessness of a combat with such a force. Perhaps Montcalm read his thoughts in his face, for a satisfied smile passed over the Frenchman's countenance. Linking his arm into that of the major, Montcalm led him back to the camp.

"You have now seen our force, and know fully with what you have to contend. You shall also see our batteries." They left the tent, and passed down to the river-bank, where the heavy guns Ralph had seen were planted. So high was the bluff at this point, that it rose somewhat higher than either fort, and a slight plunge could be given to the shot. The major looked over the work with a critical eye. Montcalm laughed.

"I hope you can find no fault with this?"

"Every fault in the world, sir. The shot from this battery will discomfort us somewhat. In fact, I do not know but we shall be forced to use our shelters from time to time. But, sir, if you will take the trouble to look at the fort, you will see

a gun in the southern embrasure. That gun is nearly as heavy as any you have here, and when you send your compliments to us, I will engage to return them from that piece. Only you must excuse me if you do not get gun for gun."

"Cool!" muttered the marquis. "*Peste*. Can I not frighten him at all? How long, major, do you suppose yonder fort will stand against our batteries?"

"That remains to be proved, sir. I think it might be made to stand a month, provided your batteries sustained no injury."

Montcalm looked at him sharply, as he said this, but made no comment, and the four went back. Perrie was amused that the great marquis could not scare the Englishman, and enjoyed his chagrin very much. They were soon seated in the tent, enjoying a bottle of wine of rare vintage, which had ripened upon the slopes of sunny France, long years before.

"But you have not fully stated your business, my dear major," said Montcalm. "Does it concern me alone?"

"I did not come here to see your force, marquis. But while in our works, your aide revealed the fact that you had a very dear friend of mine in your hands. This person I very much desire to see, and it is in your power only to grant it."

"Who may it be?"

"His name is Ralph Warren."

The marquis leaned back, and looked the major steadily in the face, evidently annoyed and pained at the request.

CHAPTER V

IN BONDS.

WE left Ralph Warren crouching in his den among the leaves, from whence he had seen the band go by in pursuit of the chief, and then he came out to watch. Seeing by their movements that they meant to camp for the night, he went back to his covert and lay down to sleep.

How long he slept he did not know, but he was awakened in the midst of darkness by an Indian loping by. Then he arose, made ready his arms, and went out into the night. When

near enough to hear the tread of the sentries, and distinguish voices, he lay flat upon the earth, and waited. A bush screened him from view.

As he lay there, an Indian passed in company with a French captain. A few feet from him they paused, when the officer, giving some brief order to the Indian, turned back. Near the bush he stopped, and stooped to fasten his shoe. This was the moment for the scout, for it brought the other within reach of his hand. Drawing a pistol, he hit him such a rap across the back of the head that he came heavily to the ground. Hastily gagging his prostrate foe, he began to strip him of his uniform, and to invest him with his own clothing. The fanciful suit of the young man, who was a stout fellow, very near his own size, was soon disposed to advantage on his person. This done, he left him to "chew the cud of sweet and bitter fancies," in the shape of a two-inch pine stick, to his heart's content.

Passing below the sentry to whom he had heard the officer speak, he was halted by a sudden "*Qui vive!*" from the next post. Ralph was a perfect master of the Canadian French, and the sentry, who had seen him pass the post above, never suspected him.

"I have forgotten the pass-word," he whispered, "give it me."

The man laughed. "*Avez vous quelque chose?*" (Have you any thing?)

"Je n'ai rien, (I have nothing), except this," was the reply "and as I consider it a pity that so good a soldier as yourself should be destitute of something warm on such a night as this, therefore—" he placed a flask in the soldier's hand. The fellow dropped his musket into the hollow of his arm, and then elevated the bottom of the flask. He lowered it with a sigh of satisfaction, and looked as though he would like to repeat the dose.

"Do that again, comrade," said Ralph, "after you have given me the countersign."

"The countersign is, 'Montcalm,'" replied the sentry, "and I will do that again." The bottom of the flask rose into the air.

"Keep it, comrade, since you like it so well, and look to your duty. English scouts may be lurking about, and you

would not like to have one of them get ahead of you in any way. They sometimes do sharp things."

"Indeed they do, Capitaine Hubert. I remember once while we were at Louisburg, a vile spy of the English came upon me on the island, and tied me neck and heels, while he marched about on my beat, and took a full view of the battery. That was the way we lost it."

"Do you know what they call him?"

"That I do. He is called Warren by us, but the Indians call him Big Elk!"

"Is he so large?"

"About your size, capitaine."

"Would you know him if you saw him again?"

"I think I would, indeed. I would know him by his great bushy head, and hoarse voice. I remember how he walked *my* beat, with *my* musket in his hand, too well. They do say that he is in yonder fort."

"Certainly he is. And you must look out for him. Try the flask again, comrade."

"Let him but come near me, and I will make him mine, sure," said the other, valorously.

"Do so, comrade; and, in the mean time, do not shout out in that manner. You will have the officer of the guard upon you, to find out what this noise is about."

"I thought *you* were officer of the guard, capitaine?"

"So I was, but I was detailed for special duty; something a little private. The officer of the guard is Capitaine—Capitaine—*Peste!* I can never speak his name. But it does not matter, I must go."

Passing the second line, he soon made his way into the camp by means of the password so easily gained. It was a busy and exciting scene. Every one was preparing for the coming fray. Avoiding the light of the camp-fires, he stood about in the shadows, listening to the conversation of the officers and soldiers. From them he gathered much useful information, that, had he been able to work his way out of the camp, the designs of the French might have been frustrated.

But the scout was too bold. He determined to make his way to the *marqué* of Montcalm, and from his own lips hear his plan. Before doing this he looked sharply about to see

that he was not observed, and then walked with a quick step toward the center of the camp. Twice he was hailed by officers, and failed to notice them. One turned away in high wrath, muttering about "that fellow Hubert, stuck up because the Old Baron had deigned to notice him, so much, that he cut old friends in that shameful manner." But under the circumstances "Hubert" could not stop to explain matters to his disconsolate friend, and kept on his way. He was looking for the marquee of the commander, and for some place near it where he might hide. It was an enterprise no more desperate than some the scout had carried through successfully. He found head-quarters soon, by the great flag which hung from its white pavilion, and passed it by, brushing the canvas with his hand. The steady hum of voices assured him that the officers were within, and he began to cast about for ways and means of getting near the tent without being seen, for he had fully made up his mind to know what those officers were doing.

The marquee stood close to another, which threw the space between them into the deepest shade. Passing around this tent, he cautiously crept in between them upon the opposite side and lay still for some time, undecided what to do. Men passed and repassed him as he lay. The hum of the camp rose loudly about, and a thrill passed over him as he reflected that detection would be death. But he had escaped often when death stared him in the face, perhaps, *too* often, for he had grown strangely rash, and had lost all fear of danger.

What would *she* think if she knew that he had thrust himself into the jaws of the lion? He would not permit himself to think of her at that desperate moment.

He drew a knife and cut a small hole in the tent-cloth. Like the wound of merry Mercutio, "it was not so deep as a well, nor as wide as a church door, but it was enough." Through it he obtained a view of the interior.

Nearly a dozen officers were within, many of whom he knew, for he had met them on the battle-field and in the bivouac when they little mistrusted his presence. There was the marquis, who would have been chosen as the leader of the great enterprise by the most casual observer. His eyes had that strange power which is given to but few. This man had but one purpose, and that was to make the name of

France a power and a terror in the New World. How well he succeeded, until death cut him down, let history tell.

There again was Moran, Montcalm's right arm. There, too, was De Sayre, and Frontenac the younger, and others of no less note. They were seated in various attitudes about the council-room, now and then venturing a suggestion, even the youngest, for Montcalm was too good a soldier not to take advantage of every help. A plan of Oswego lay upon the table, which they were studying intently. Here and there places were pointed out as eligible for batteries. Here, a causeway. There again, a skirmish line.

"Where is Hubert De Lisle?" said the baron, all at once raising his head. "He has a chart which I desire to compare with this."

"Sire," said one officer, "I saw Hubert, nearly an hour ago, passing through the camp, in company with the Indian chief, Un-da-min."

"I sent him," replied the baron, "and it is time he returned. He was only to pass the outer line with the Indian, send him on his way, and then return."

"He has returned, sire," said the youngest officer of the party, whom the scout remembered as having been vexed because he would not answer him a short time before. "I met him near the *marquéé* not ten minutes ago, but thinking he was coming here, and as he did not choose to notice me, I let him pass."

"You must be mistaken," said the baron. "I ordered him to come here on his return, and Hubert always obeys orders. You still think it was him?"

"I know it was him. There is no one of the staff except himself and Perrie Du Bois who have the cross of the Legion. It was not Perrie, for he is six inches shorter than Hubert. I am so confident that it was he, that I will go out, find him, and bring him to you at once."

"Go," said the baron.

The young officer passed out, and brushed hurriedly past the spot where the scout lay, who drew back with a scarcely suppressed chuckle as he thought that the object of the search was half a mile away, gagged and bound, lying under a bush, dressed in buckskin leggings and hunting-shirt. Within the tent, the baron looked at Montcalm, saying:

"What do you think, sire?"

"That either Hubert, or our young friend, Gaspard, has taken too much champagne."

"That is as it may be. I wish he was here. Draw up, gentlemen, and let us on with our plan. What think you marquis, of planting a gun or two in this spot?"

"All very good. But your first plan strikes me as the best. Here," placing his finger on the spot afterward chosen as the site of the river-side battery, "is the place. At this point we shall have a clear sweep down the river, and by means of a strong battery we can soon force the surrender or evacuation of the fort on this side. The other can be reached from the same point. Ha! What is that? Are the English upon us, that they make such a din?"

A sudden tumult was gaining strength toward the outposts, and men were hurrying from the center of the camp. The party in the tent leaped up, and ran to the door, with the exception of the marquis and baron, who sat immovable, waiting for an explanation. The clamor grew louder and approached the tent. Ralph, peeping out for a solution of the mystery, was favored with one which pleased him very little. A man, bare-headed, and dressed in the buckskins of a scout, was rushing down toward him. As he came nearer, he recognized the features of Monsieur Le Capitaine Hubert De Lisle, whom he thought snugly ensconced under a bush, far away from the tent, and the power of harming him.

He was mistaken. Captain Hubert was a very sharp man, and knew enough to be still until he was sure that the scout would not return and kill him; then began to roll toward the nearest picket, with the comfortable reflection that when he reached the point aimed at, the sentry would probably think it an Indian trick and shoot him. It was a hazardous enterprise, and a very slow one at that, for the bonds of the scout would not yield an inch. Neither was he able to speak, on account of a superfluity of pine bark in his mouth, or able to make any sound beyond an inarticulate murmur. But being justly incensed against the scout, who had not only robbed him of his uniform, but further affronted him by biting him like a horse, he persevered, willing to suffer martyrdom if by that means he might bring the scout to the rope.

It so happened, that, as he rolled in toward the post, he came in contact with a very sharp stone, which he proceeded at once to use upon the gag, and with good effect, for to his surprise and joy the stick soon dropped from his mouth, and he could speak.

“Jaques!” shouted he.

“Le diable,” returned the sentry. “Qui vive?”

“A friend, with the countersign.”

“Advance, friend, and give the countersign.”

“Montcalm! But I can’t advance, as I am tied hand and foot. Come here, Jaques, and help me. You have let a cursed spy into your camp in my uniform.”

“Not I,” replied the soldier. “He went below. Don’t be in such a hurry, capitaine; I can never untie this knot while you jump about so. He knew how to tie a knot that tied this.”

“Cut it! Cut it!” gasped the captain.

The sentry had only cut the buckskin thong about his feet, when the captain leaped up, overturning him in his haste, and only thinking of bringing the scout to justice, and not of his personal appearance, foaming at the mouth with rage, he ran to the *marqué* of Montcalm. Into this he plunged, in considerable excitement, regardless of the fact that so many distinguished officers were present, presenting himself metamorphosed to such a ludicrous extent that the young officers laughed in spite of themselves. He would certainly never have thought of entering the presence of the great *marquis* in such undignified haste under any other circumstances.

Ralph began to feel a little uneasy; but, for his life, he could not help laughing at the ludicrous figure cut by this young gallant. He had discarded the coon-skin at the outset, and appeared with the simple covering for his head which nature gave him. The hunting-shirt had been put on him more for convenience than show by the scout; for, in his haste, he had got the buttons behind. His hands were still tied behind his back.

Dire was the confusion in the tent. Every one began to question him, in various ways. Montcalm leaped to his feet.

“What now! Hubert?” thundered he. “What means this masquerade?”

“It means, sire,” replied the other, half-choked by passion

"that I have been notoriously abused, and that you have work before you."

The spy drew back with a look of grim determination upon his face. It was plain to him that he had run his head into a trap, from the fact that he had not anchored the captain to a tree. As he withdrew, he heard him say :

"I have been shamefully ill-treated. It means, likewise, that you have a spy in the camp."

The marquis cut the thongs which bound his hands with a dagger lying near by. "Now," said he, "speak."

The captain plunged at once into his story, pausing, from time to time, to utter invectives against the spy. The marquis heard enough to convince him that a spy was in the camp, and then he sprung out into the open air.

"Ho! there, Captain Du Bois," he shouted. "Take a guard and search the camp. Spread out everywhere; look for a man in our uniform. *Peste*, we are doing well if we suffer this at the outset."

The scout saw his danger, but, at the same time, could not see how he could better himself by moving. Indeed, he thought it the safest place he could find; for who could believe that a spy would have the audacity to cut a hole in the General's tent, and peep through. Even in his perilous predicament, the mind of the scout was buoyant. He likened his position to that of "Gil Blas," in the robbers' cave, and nearly caught himself saying: "Now, behold the worthy nephew of my uncle, Gil Perez, caught like a rat in a trap."

Lights flashed out upon the night air, and men were tramping everywhere in search of him. He looked into the tent upon his right. No one was within, and he was about to withdraw, when his eye fell upon a pile of army blankets in one corner. He stepped into the place, with the intention of hiding under them, and doubtless would have accomplished his object, and lain concealed until the alarm had in some measure subsided, when, unluckily, he stumbled over a half-drunken Indian chief, who was sleeping on the blankets. Up started the Huron, with a wild yell, and grappled with the daring scout. He did not know his man. In an instant the strong hands dashed him to the earth. Seizing him by the throat, he dashed his head against the tent-pole. The strong

limbs of the Indian straightened out, and, with a glance at the prostrate body, the scout arose.

He had work before him, now. The yells of the Huron had been heard, and hundreds were hurrying to the spot. The scout looked not back, but, drawing his knife, he cut a long slit in the tent-cloth, and went out.

The French were shouting on the other side, and while they were doing this, the scout was making good time the other way. To tell the truth, there was some hesitation about entering the tent, for the man who would come alone into an enemy's camp, would strike hard for his life. They hesitated some time, and then rushed in together, and found only a stunned Huron, and many footprints.

So far it was bad; for, by this time, the spy was on the other side of the camp. They were hesitating what course to pursue, when sudden yells broke out from the Huron camp; the Indians had scented their game.

So it was. The scout, in the full glare of a camp-fire, had met a renegade Englishman, who had joined his fortunes with the Hurons after he had been whipped at the post in Albany. The scoundrel knew him, at once, and set the Hurons on him. What could he do? He was at once overpowered by numbers, and taken prisoner, and led into the presence of Montcalm.

The Frenchman studied him like a book, for some moments, before he spoke. The fame of the Big Elk had reached him, and for the first time he saw the man.

"This is the first time we have met," he said.

"You are mistaken, marquis. I have met you often before."

"Where, if I may ask?"

"Several times. Once in Quebec, and twice in Montreal."

"You have been in Montreal, then?"

"I have, repeatedly."

"In Quebec?"

"Yes, sir, several times."

"In each case you went as a spy?"

"Rather a home question, marquis; but I have no hesitation in saying that I went to see what I could, and learned all I wished."

"You know the penalty?"

"I think I do."

"Death?"

"I expect it."

"And you do not fear it?"

"No man can say, truthfully, that he has no fear of death. I am not one who would shrink from it; and yet, I do not seek it. I have learned to face death, bravely, as any man may; but I do not cling to life so lightly, that I may not loose my hold with regret."

"What would tempt you to leave the English, and do service under the prince I serve. My emperor is a generous one. He would not long leave such services as yours unrequited. You have worked for your king long, and yet, you still wear the buckskin of the scout. Leave such paltry service, and join us. All you have done against us will be forgiven, and you will find a welcome among us."

"Monsieur Le Capitaine De Lisle will call me out."

Montcalm smiled. "Am I to understand that you join us?"

"No!" thundered the scout. "A thousand times, no! What do you think me, proud Frenchman? Could a man, who had served his king faithfully far into manhood, and had been nobly repaid—yes, nobly—for the confidence of my officers is to me the best payment—could he be false to his service to save a paltry life? You mistake me much, sir, or you would never have made this offer to me."

"You refuse. Very well; the offer was well meant. A court-martial will attend to your case, to-night, and you will be condemned. Your fate is in your own hands. Lead him away, and guard him well. Monsieur will have the kindness to return the clothes he borrowed from my aide, Captain De Lisle."

"They are entirely at his service," replied Ralph, casting a side-glance at the discomfited hero of the buckskins. "I have only to ask that he will return the apparel I lent him upon the occasion you speak of."

"*Canaille!*" half shrieked the other. "If you were not a prisoner, I would kill you."

The scout was led away to the guard-tent, and heavily ironed. A double guard was set about the tent, and he was left alone. Casting himself upon his blanket, he turned his

face to the wall, and pondered on his situation. He could see no hope of escape. His heart, for the first time, was wrung by a bitter pang. Had he looked for the last time upon *her* dear face? Should he never see her more? Did she think *now*, of her absent lover, loaded with chains, and sure of a disgraceful death? It was bitter, indeed, to think that he had looked for the last time into her sweet eyes, and could never take her into his arms, as, in the good old times, he had held her under the beeches before her father's door. For the major and his father had been dear friends, and, when her mother died, she had come to live with them awhile. It was then that he learned to love her. It was not long ere she was called to her father at Oswego. She went, and that alone saved her from being one in that massacre which swept every member of his family from the earth, and left him without the love of a human being, save her own. But, it seemed to him, that God's good time had come, and he was ready.

The night passed, and the flush of the morning brought him out for his trial. *That* farce was soon over. He was condemned to suffer death on the next day, at noon. He was led back to his prison tent. As he passed, I-re-ton came up, and struck him on the face. Could he have freed his hand for a moment, that blow would have been the dastard's death-warrant. As it was, the prisoner tugged fiercely at his bonds, and gnashed his teeth at the Mohawk. If a look could have blasted, the rascal would have sunk dead at his feet.

Alone, again, with his thoughts! Only once more to look upon the blessed sun! Only one more day and night for him, and then, good-night, forevermore! Was he ready to die? He remembered how his old father, now a saint in glory, had prayed for his daring son; how that mother, who was with *Him* above, had called him to her knee, and taught him of the meek and lowly One, who died for him. He had slain men in battle, often. He had sought revenge upon the murderers of his friends. That they should look down upon him, and bless his efforts, he had hoped. But *did* they?

Was he ready to leave *her*? That was the hardest blow of all. He knew that she loved him; that, wherever he went, she was praying blessings on his wayward head; and he hoped that the God whom she worshiped so beautifully

and dutifully would forgive his wickedness on earth, and take him to His rest.

He was sitting where the sunlight fell upon his bowed head, as it rested on his knees, when a cat-like tread told him that another was in the room. Raising his head, he saw I-re-ton. His face was the picture of hellish joy, and he laughed aloud as the face of Ralph was lifted to his. The heart of the prisoner was not so disciplined that he could look on this man's face and not be angry. He saw in him the murderer of his father; the face of his mother, and that sweet baby sister, were ever before his eyes. He leaped up, but his chains smote together with a dismal clang, and he sunk down again. The gratified smile deepened on the face of the chief.

"The Elk leaps long," he said, "but dis time he has leaped too far."

Ralph glared at him without reply.

"The Elk is no longer bold," continued the Indian, in a taunting tone; "he has become a snake in the grass. He crawls among the tents of the French, and they know him not. But when he goes among the wigwams of the Hurons and Mohawks, their eyes are sharp, and they see the snake."

Ralph still was silent.

"Does my brother feel pain? Do the irons of the white man chafe his wrists? He has been bound before, and did not flinch. But, now, he is like a whipped cur."

The other strained at his bonds, till they cracked and grated harshly at the effort, and the strong muscle stood out upon his arm like a suddenly swollen stream. The Indian laughed again.

"Has my brother no message to send to the fort? We are going, to-morrow, to take it. Will you send word to the 'Wild Rose,' by me? The 'Wild Rose' is mine. She shall be my squaw. She shall cook my venison, and share the lodge of a brave."

Iron, when heated to white heat, if smitten suddenly, will break out into flame. So it was with Warren. He had listened to the taunts of his red foe, until his blood was boiling, and when the wretch dared to taunt him with what he would do with Clara, and coupled *her* name with *his*, he rose, suddenly, and reared his manacled hands on high. As well attempt to avert the lightning-bolt, as that blow! Straight

and swift the irons descended upon the feathered crown of I-re-ton, crushing him to the earth. The guard heard the blow, and, rushing in, found Ralph kneeling over the fallen man, with hands raised in the attitude of repeating the blow.

"Take him out," said he, fiercely. "I do not know if he is dead, or not. I tried to finish him."

"He is head chief," said the guard, "and you have struck a bad blow for yourself. Let him alone, will you, while I call help."

He went out, and Ralph was alone with the chief. It was only in the heat of his anger that he thought of striking him again. He sat and looked at the hyena-like face, with the blood trickling down his temples upon the sand. He hoped that he was dead. And the thought that, if he was dead, it was by his hand, gave him a thrill of joy. He knew him as the pitiless slayer of innocence, and he hated him for it. He went to the prostrate form again, and looked at the wound. The Indian moved, painfully, as his fingers touched it, and uttered a little moan. He felt that the blow had not been sure, although a heavy one. One thing more he looked at: the left arm of the wounded man, and he smiled when he saw how well his rifle had done its work.

A heavy tramp of feet aroused him, and the guard came slowly in. With him came Montcalm, and a half-dozen minor officers, to see how the chief fared. Without looking at the prisoner, and with stern eyes, Montcalm ordered the soldiers to convey the body to his tent, and give it in charge of his chief surgeon. Only once he looked at Ralph, as the men were going. The scout could not understand the strange look with which the General regarded him. Then he went out, and once more the scout was alone. He heard the rattling volleys of musketry through the morning, and, at very long intervals, a shot from the fort—a rifle-shot, for the besieged used no cannon, as yet. Whenever these shots were heard, he would start from his blanket, until a stern, "Lie down!" from his guard, warned him that he was never to join in battle again, and he fell back with a moan.

When the midday came, he seemed to feel a sort of languor, and, turning his face to the wall, forgetting the strife of human passions in his own breast, as well as all around him, the brave man slept an unbroken sleep.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SIEGE.

THE major had asked to see Ralph.

"He is your friend, you say?"

"He is very dear to me. The betrothed of my daughter."

"And you have a message from her to him?"

"She does not yet know that he is a prisoner."

"I am very sorry for her, and for you."

"Why so, sir?"

"Because, he must die to-morrow," he answered, quietly.

"So soon! What has he done?"

"Don't, major; you are too old a soldier for that. He was caught spying about my camp; tied one of my officers, Moran's aide here, neck and heels, took his uniform, and walked into camp. He got hold of the countersign, in some way—how, I have not yet learned—and marched about camp at his leisure. It was the coolest thing I ever heard of. Come here; I want to show you something."

The major followed him to the side of the *marqueé*, and the Frenchman insinuated his finger into a small hole in the tent-cloth.

"You see this?"

The major nodded.

"Well, without doubt, this friend of yours cut that hole, and looked in while we were planning the assault on yonder work. How can you expect any thing but death for him?"

The major turned away with a sigh. He was soldier enough to know that the stern rules of the service demanded a sacrifice, and that Ralph was doomed, unless he could escape.

"It is a pity, too; but it can not be helped. The man is brave, and true to his country. I will confess to you, *mon ami*, that I offered the fellow a commission if he would come over to our side, and he spurned it with contempt."

"You would have despised him had he accepted your offer."

said the major, "and you did not know the man or you would never have made the overture. I wonder he did not dash his irons into your face."

"You are a bold man, major, but, at the same time, right enough. A renegade is despised of all men, and I do not hesitate to say that I should have had no respect for him, while I should have employed him. But, speaking of irons, my dear sir, he is too free in their use, altogether. Yesterday an ally of mine, I-re-ton, the Mohawk, went into his tent to speak to him. Ten minutes after, the guard ran out, exclaiming that 'the Big Elk had killed the chief with his manacles.' I went in to see about it. The chief was lying in a pool of blood, almost at the feet of the scout, who stood by regarding him. *Peste*, why would he do it? He has made trouble for himself and for me. For the Indians swear that, if the chief dies, they will have the scout, and burn him with fire."

"But you surely will not suffer it?"

"How can I tell? I shall hold out as long as I can. More than half my force, as you have seen, is composed of these men. If I refuse them revenge, they will leave me. They captured him in their own camp, and I really had no right to him in the first place. I-re-ton's own men took him, and if they choose to demand him, and I do not give him up, they will leave me the first chance they get."

"But, marquis—"

"I assure you I will do what I can. If the chief comes to himself, he will surely wish to defer the execution, and I do not think he will die. I got a hint from another source that they meant to demand this scout from us; but now I do not think there is a doubt. I-re-ton, who hates him furiously, for some reason or other, probably went into the tent this morning, Indian fashion, to tell the prisoner that he was his prize and to taunt him. I must say that he made very little capital out of that, though. But come, I will take you to your friend."

The two passed through the center of the camp. Few French were in it, for they were down by the bank of the river, and the shore of the lake, making more complete their batteries, which were to carry destruction into the forts of the English. The guard-tent was silent. Only five stern fellows

paced steadily to and fro on every side. These presented arms as the marquis passed in and the two stood in the presence of Ralph.

He was asleep, a rare specimen of manly grace. The irons ill became such limbs as his. The marquis pointed admiringly at him, saying, in a whisper: "He is the best formed man I ever saw!"

The whisper aroused him. In an instant he started up and put out his hand to the major, who, good man, went to the one whom he had hoped to make the staff of his old age, and folding his arms about him, like Jacob of old, "he lifted up his voice and wept." The marquis *had* a heart, much as had been said to the contrary, and, moving out of the tent, he paced to and fro, waiting for the half-hour, which he had given the major, to expire.

Meanwhile, the two in the tent sat down side by side, while Ralph, laying his weary head upon his more than father's shoulder, gave him fond messages for that loved one, who, on earth, he never hoped to meet again. He, indeed, had given up hope of seeing any friend whatever, and thought how hard it was to die, and she never to know what was in his heart for her. Now, he was more than satisfied.

He placed in the major's hand, who wept through all like a child, a little locket which she had given him in happier days, and which he had since guarded, in battle and in storm, as his life. He sent it back to her, he said, to remind her of what had been, and what *might* have been, had it pleased God to spare his life. How long they sat and talked they little knew, but all at once there arose a murmur outside the guard-tent and they heard the voice of Montcalm, crying:

Stand back, knave, or I'll slay you as I would a dog!"

The major sprung to the door, and saw a sight which he remembered to his dying day. A hundred Indians, every one painted as black as night, crowded upon the marquis, who, with drawn sword, disputed their way. The appearance of the Englishman was greeted by a hoarse cry from every voice. The major saw at once the object of their coming. They were after blood. He, too, drew his sword, and took a place by the side of the marquis. Ralph dragged himself to the door, his irons clanking as he went; he saw the mad band and

he knew them. They were the men of I-re-ton, who had fought him many a time, and who had sworn to burn him at the stake.

The bold stand of the officers and the guard created a halt. Then one of the chiefs advanced, and addressed the marquis, who interrupted him fiercely :

"What do ye here, Casco? What means this clamoring before a tent where a prisoner is kept?"

"Let not my father be angry with his friend," replied the chief. "Casco has been upon the war-path many times, and has struck many blows for the Great Father. He is willing to do much more. As for this prisoner, he is ours; we want him."

"How is he yours?"

"Has my father forgotten? Does he not remember that the braves of I-re-ton chased him to the shores of the lake? How at night, crawling like a snake in the grass, he came from the great wigwam? He heard the words of my father and his chiefs. But they could not see him; he came among the Indians, and they seized him and brought him to our father that he might question him, and then judge him by his law."

The marquis spoke sharply: "All this has been done. He has been tried, found guilty, and condemned to die to-morrow; what more would you have?"

"Let not my father be so hot against his friend," went on the wily savage, who was a sort of rude Demosthenes among his tribe. "Let him not be angry with his true friend. Hear a little further. We were willing that he should be tried by your law; we forgot that he had slain our brothers often, and said, 'let him die by the bullet.' But, last sun, he made more blood. Our war-chief lies dying in your tent, wounded by his hand. Give, therefore, this man to us, that we may burn him with fire."

Major Bowen cast a horrified look at the marquis, who appeared to be hesitating as to what he should do.

"Suppose I refuse to do what you ask; what then?"

"Then the Indians fight no more for their great father, since he will not give them what is their right. Let my father think well upon his answer."

The marquis looked about him: "Have my brothers thought what they are doing? The war-chief lies wounded in my

tent. You say true, this prisoner is yours, and I can not keep him from you; but would not I-re-ton be angry because he could not see him die?"

The Indians looked from one to the other in dismay. They had nearly brought upon themselves the anger of him they feared more than Montcalm. Casco spoke again:

"My father is right. We will keep him in our wigwams until I-re-ton can look upon his death, and then we will bring him out to die."

"Will you do this thing?" said Bowen.

"I must," was the stern reply. "You yourself can see how I am pressed."

The major went back into the tent. Ralph stood leaning against the pole of the tent. A stern sort of calm had settled over his noble face. The major went to him, took him in his arms, kissed him on the cheek, and led him out to Montcalm. The latter beckoned to one of the guards, and he freed Ralph's feet from the irons. Here was an example of Christian principle! The French marquis, undoubtedly one of the bravest and most skillful Generals of his time, resigned a brave and true-hearted white man into the hands of savages, whose avowed purpose was to burn and torture him at the stake. It seems hardly possible that such things should be; but history bears out the truth of our statement.

There was a silent hand-pressure, and the major saw the brave young man led away by his painted foes. Montcalm was reading his face. Doubtless he read horror, detestation and agony there, for he said:

"It is a sad thing."

The major could not speak.

"You hate me," continued the marquis, "and yet I believe I am just in this. Will you show me how I could escape the net?"

"I can not talk," said the major. "I pray you let me return to the fort."

"As you please," said he, testily. "But, before you go, take my message to your commander. In five minutes after yonder gate closes upon you, my batteries shall open upon the fort. And I tell you, that, in case we are forced to take your place by storm, I can not restrain my Indians."

"I see that very plainly. The same fate probably would await us did we surrender. I will go now, if you will be so kind as to send the young captain with me. He can return with the final answer of my colonel."

"It is not necessary. A white flag hung over the southern battlement will be enough. I will go part way with you myself."

The two walked silently to the edge of the woods, the major bearing the white flag thrown across his arm. He had a better safeguard in the person of Montcalm. Here they parted without shaking hands, for the major would not take the hand of one who had just given his dearest friend up to death. The gate opened and closed again. The commandant met him at the gate.

"If you mean to surrender, hang out a white flag; if not, get ready, for he opens on you in five minutes."

"I shall hang out no such flag yet. What are our chances?"

"Small indeed. Montcalm has five thousand men."

"What of Ralph?"

"He is in the hands of the Indians, given up to them by that vile Frenchman, and he dies at the stake as soon as I-re-ton, whom he half killed with his handcuffs, gets well again. Have you told Clara?"

The colonel nodded.

"I must go to her a moment, and then I shall be ready for work."

He passed into the quarters and up to his own rooms. Clara sat at the window, with her head resting on her hands. As her father entered she looked up; the miseries of a century seemed crowded into her beautiful eyes.

"Tell me," she murmured, "it can not surely be worse."

The major sat down by her side, and enfolding her with his strong right arm, told her all Ralph's messages, and how nobly he was making ready to die. She heard him through like one in a dream; then, winding her arms about his neck, told him he must help her to bear this, for henceforth they must be all the world to each other. That they must together keep sacred his memory, since it was the will of God, that, on earth, they might never look upon his face again.

While they sat, a crash burst upon the outer air, and they knew that the battle had commenced. Hurrying Clara into the lower part of the building, the major ran out upon the parapet and looked from an embrasure. Scarcely had he done so, when a bullet from a sharpshooter's rifle rung sharply by his ear.

"Be careful, major," said a lieutenant by his side. "That battery is going to give us trouble. I wish we could muzzle those dogs."

He was right. The Montcalm battery gave back a truthful answer, for a puff of smoke broke from the muzzle of one of the huge guns, and a twenty-pound ball struck the fort gun close at his side upon the muzzle, driving it ten feet back, and smashing the carriage to atoms.

"Confound it," cried Bowen. "I don't like that; he has spoiled my pet gun."

"He came near spoiling you," replied Sergeant Mooney, taking him about the waist, and dragging him away from the spot, just as another ball came sailing over their heads. "It's disrespect til' me superior officer, I know. But divil a bit can I help it. Come back, will ye?"

"You are too careful of me, sergeant," said the major, rather sadly. "You ought to give me a right to be careless now."

"I know phat ye *mane*," major, dear; "but, ye are all in the wrong. Ralph, poor lad, is gone. It's sorry I am for that same. It was a hard blow to the Miss Clara to lose him, but phat wud she do at all, at all, if ye were taken away? Ye have the more r'ason to save yourself to take care of her."

The major looked quickly up.

"You are right, sergeant. I will take care of myself for her sake. I am glad you spoke."

"Kape out av the embrasures, will ye, thin?"

"I must watch that battery, but I will take care. Look out!"

Another heavy shot came flying over their heads, burying itself in the center of the parade.

"The ball is opened," cried the major, sighting a gun bearing on the Montcalm battery. "Let me try them one. Now then all ready—fire!"

The ball sped, and he had the satisfaction of seeing a cloud of dust fly up from the parapet of the battery, while the Indians skirting the woods uttered a yell of terror.

"Try a little grape on those bushes, major Bowen," said a quiet voice at his elbow. He turned; the commandant stood at his side. A howitzer was wheeled to the front, a little canister topped the load, and the searching missiles flew away on their errand.

"Good! Good! major. You tickled him that time." The officer was rubbing his hands in glee, and well he might, for, at the first dose of grape, the skulkers, who had been gradually drawing near the fort, aiming to pick off some of the officers, rose with a yell of rage, poured in a single volley, and fell back into the woods, their pace somewhat accelerated by another charge of grape.

An Indian can no more stand before cannon than before the push of the bayonet in an open field. He is a child of the forest. The savage warfare suits him best. He has been taught to send the deadly shaft from tree and bush upon the foe. But, the sound of so much powder is too much for him. Tortures could not make him stand when the grape is searching through the thickets.

The balls from the French batteries fell thick and fast. The bomb-proofs were often brought into requisition. The sharpshooters' rifles were singing along the line, when a rifle-crack, joined with a sharp jingle, called the attention of Pat Mooney to the major. He had been standing over a gun, sighting it, when, just as he raised his head and gave the order to fire, a bullet splintered his epaulet, and raised the flesh slightly upon his shoulder. He looked about him; he had been standing where the embankment screened him from view. From whence did the shot come?

At this moment Ut-ta-wan touched him on the arm. Following the direction of his finger, he saw the top of a solitary pine, rising high above the surrounding bushes, agitated suddenly.

"Aha! my lad. Are you there? Look out for yourself for I am after you."

A painted Huron had climbed the tree to get a better shot at the English. Covered by the body of the tree, he thought

himself safe; but he was mistaken indeed, for the major wheeled the little howitzer to the front.

"Keep that fellow steady with your rifle, chief, and I will show you a trick."

The chief threw forward his rifle, and turning the muzzle here and there as the Indian, who did not like the look of things, tried to descend, held him in his place. The gun was sighted to suit him, and then the major applied the match. Every leaf upon the pine top was stripped as if a whirlwind had passed over it, and in the midst, hanging face upward across the ragged stump, lay the daring rifleman, dead! The slanting rays of the afternoon sun fell upon the upturned face, looking grim and ghastly under the waning light. The appalling cry which burst from the lips of the Huron sent a chill through the hearts of the women in the fort. That yell spoke the determination of the Indians. A horrible vengeance should come for this.

Still, the shot fell like rain. The walls were crumbling about them and half their guns were useless. But the garrison stood boldly to their arms. When night fell, the major, with a chosen band, prepared for a hazardous enterprise, no less than spiking the guns of the battery, on the river, which was shaking their walls to the earth.

They waited until nightfall, and then two battalions of the Rifles marched out of the main gate, and charged across the glacis in the direction of the Lake Shore Battery. The din they made aroused the French, and a cloud of skirmishers soon enveloped their front. Quickly they heard the French troops from the left rushing to the rescue. This was what the assailants wanted, and, after playing with their foe for half an hour, without advancing further than the outer edge of the glacis, they retreated slowly. They were not fools enough to cross this line. They knew that an ambush was doubtless prepared for them, and so they skirmished, until a loud bugle-blast warned them to return.

This was repeated many times, keeping the French busy, while, in the mean time, with thirty chosen men, Major Bowen slipped out of the sally-port, and took possession of a large bateau lying upon the shore. The Onondaga was with him, and they pulled manfully up the river, toward

the obnoxious battery, keeping close to the eastern shore.

At this time, lofty bluffs, crowned with pine trees, walled in the river on either hand. Pulling in the shadow while they moved with care they were safe from observation, for no human eye could pierce the darkness which hung about them like a mantle. They neared the spot where a watch-fire in the battery threw a broad band of light across the stream. Running close up to the wall, on the eastern side, they held by the overhanging bushes, while a brief consultation was held.

Every man was provided with a hammer and spikes, and received orders to see that every gun was spiked, no matter who fell. With this understanding, they dropped the oars into the water, and started for the other shore. The watch-fire was dying out; no one was there to feed it.

Noiselessly they pulled ahead. They reached the shore, stepped out, grasped their rifles, while knives and pistols were loosened, and they were ready for the hazardous undertaking.

Up the steep they hurried, while Eagle Eye remained with one other to guard the boat, much against his will. He saw them crawl stealthily over the verge of the cliff, and then he beheld no more.

For a moment all was still; then the very sky seemed to rock, as if Pandemonium had broken loose upon the bluff. Out of the darkness the flash and report of rifles, the fall of slain men, the dying groan, the victorious cry, came with fearful distinctness to their ears. Bowen was attacked by the Hurons!

The Onondaga would not stay after that. Leaving the boat in charge of the other, he mounted the bank, and cast his eye over a wild combat. Two hundred Indians surrounded the brave band of Bowen, who, with backs against the rocky rampart, were striking fierce blows for life. Half of their number already lay gasping on the sod, within the rampart of the coveted battery. One, whose hand still grasped the nail with which he would have spiked the gun, lay across the breech, scalped and bloody. Bowen was menacing half a dozen Hurons with his pistols, who were pressing him hard. In some way, he had been detached from

his force, and was falling back slowly to his boat, calling to his men to break through, and come to him. They essayed to do this, but the movement put the feeble band wholly at the mercy of their savage foes. The major saw that there was no hope for him or them; hemmed in on every side as they were, they could only die bravely. They fought with desperation. For every man of the fourteen left, at least two Indians died that night. The opponents of the major at last flung themselves fiercely upon him. Two fell, shot through the heart. A third, rushing on, was impaled upon the sword-blade of this brave man. A fourth, not dreaming of *his* presence, was pierced by the knife of the chief, who now rushed to the rescue. His tomahawk was in the brain of the fifth; the sixth died by the hand of Bowen. The major turned for flight, when, unexpectedly, both himself and Ut-ta-wan were grappled by a new foe. The strife was over, for the whole band was upon them close—all their comrades being slain.

"Break away, chief, and if you escape, tell them how we died," panted Bowen.

"Better you give up," replied the chief. "French coming now. No min' me. I get 'way."

Lifting one of the Hurons in his arms as though he had been a child, Eagle Eye bore him to the edge of the rocky wall, looked once behind him, saw the major still struggling among a mingled mass of French and Indians, and then dropped into the stream. The Indians dared not fire, lest they should kill their comrade. Rushing to the verge, they looked over. There was a great ripple in the water where he had sunk from sight, and that was all.

A cry of anger broke from every lip, for they knew their man too well to suppose he would not escape. They saw the boat, with a single occupant, drift away from the shore, and, once in the current, float swiftly out into the darkness. Just below they heard a defiant yell, and they knew that the scout was safe, and the eddy hurried back toward the shore the dead body of the man who had fallen from the cliff in his grasp.

But, while they looked, a strange, brave deed was done by one of the men who had fallen early in the fight, stunned, but not dead. When the strife was at its highest, this man rose, took the spikes and hammer from a dead comrade's

grasp, and began to spike the guns. A dozen swift strokes and it was over. Just as he spiked the last gun, the French poured into the work, and he was beaten down by a gun breech, bloody and half dead. Afterward, the Indians found that he had life in him, and saved him for the torture. This was the brave sergeant, Pat Mooney, who had done the work of the expedition. Had this been known, it might have prolonged the siege, perhaps saved the fort.

It was better, after all, that the commandant did not know how well the sergeant had done his work, for the post must, in all probability have fallen, in the end. The sufferings after its siege were cruel enough, and no additional blood should have been shed.

The Indian and his comrade reached the fort, and told the mournful story of the fight. The commandant at once declared the fort untenable, and determined to move to the work on the eastern shore. The guns were spiked; the ammunition was boated across the stream and dragged laboriously up the opposite bank. Next day the French found, to their astonishment, that they could elicit no reply to their guns from the lake shore. They did not use the river-side battery—it was silent.

A flag was sent to the fort. The bearer found it deserted, and entered the broken gate. Within, all was desolation. The quarters were a heap of ruins, the walls broken down in places; two embrasures were knocked into one. The flag wandered about the works a while, and then returned to tell the marquis that they were at his disposal.

A short time after, the men in the other forts looked on with sad hearts, while a party of the French were busy upon the walls of Shirley. They knew what they were doing, and a cry of execration burst from their lips, as the French tri-color rose slowly to the top of the broken staff, flaunting out in the morning breeze, above the Red Cross of Old England; and the thunder of the guns that greeted its rising, seemed to be a pre-
age of the fall of the fort where they stood.

CHAPTER VII.

PAT MOONEY'S RACE AND RALPH'S DUEL.

PAT MOONEY was led along between two stalwart Hurons, while one marched in front and the other in the rear. They were determined that this prisoner should not escape them, and that they would have some of the sport that suited best their cruel natures. They longed for the torture, the post and the fire. They remembered, with vindictive fury, that many braves lay dead in the battery. It was not enough for them that they had slain them all; for had not the Eagle escaped them, and the French taken the major out of their hands? This one surely was theirs.

They led him into the tent in which Ralph lay. A look of genuine joy lighted up the Irishman's face as he saw Ralph. He had thought the brave scout dead.

"Arrah, Ralph, me b'y, but it's glad I am ye haven't kicked the bucket yit. Phat the ould Satin wud they be doin' wid ye, at all?"

"They would like to burn me at the stake."

"Ah, the murtherin' thaves. Here, ye black baste of an Indian; it's a roast ye want, and phat d'ye say til an Irish stew? I'm naught but a prisoner, and it's me that'll take Ralph's place, d'ye see, ye red nayger that ye bees."

"I am afraid that your being a prisoner will not help you much, Pat. They will treat you the same as they do me."

"It's against all the rules of war, and I'll jist apply to the Gineral. Here, ye spalpeen, go ye to the Gineral and tell him that Misther Mooney, Sergeant Pat Mooney, av the rifles, wud have a few words wid him. Start! ye baste. Phat the howly saints ye grinnin' at, ye jackanapes?"

"He don't understand you."

"Faith, so he don't. Here, you, Ralph, ye spake to him. Ye can spake the vile language av thim."

"It is no use, Pat. If Montcalm don't know that you are

a prisoner now, he never will. From what I can hear, they are making ready to have you run the gantlet even now. And my advice to you is, if they give you half a chance, break through them and put for the river. How were you taken."

Pat gave an account of the fight.

"You say the major is in the hands of the French."

"Yis, I think so, bad luck to the foreign rogues."

"Then he is safe. I am glad of that, for his own sake and for hers. I wish I had this chance at the gantlet."

"Ye may, then. Faix, I don't want it."

"No, they would not give me that chance, for they watch me as cats watch rats. I can't turn over fairly but it brings one of them to the door. Ah!"

The entrance was darkened, and several Indians came into the lodge. The two men, still bound, were led out into the open air. Many fires had been lighted in the camp, and it was bathed in brilliant light. A long line of warriors, several hundred in number, were ranged in double rows down the center, armed with clubs, hatchets, and knives, the latter being used to prick the runners, but not to wound. Pat was allowed to remove his coat and vest, and stood out with his belt tightly girded about his body, ready for the task. A fine, ruddy glow was on his face, and he looked as if he were about to engage in a foot-race, and not a struggle for life. The Indians shouted in admiration, for they looked for sport. They were gratified; but before they were done, repented that they had not sent the scout into the lines instead of the supple sergeant, who now stood calmly waiting for the word, with his eye fixed on the swaying line.

"Start!" was the word, and the Irishman plunged between the lines, snatching the short ashlen club from the first who struck at him. He was half-way down, and handling the shillalah with remarkable dexterity, every blow falling upon that instead of his uncovered head. Right and left flew the Indians, under his lightning-like strokes. At last, one chief, angry at the failure to hit him, threw himself in his path.

Whack! whack! First one end and then the other of the stick came down on the feathered crown, and Casco, for it was he, came to the ground, amid the derisive yells of his

companions, who resented this break in the unchangeable rules of the gantlet."

The Irishman had cleared the line and turned to look back on his work. Half a dozen braves were wiping bleeding noses on the path, and he was still as fresh as a May morning. Flourishing his stick with a Tipperary yell, he dashed off to the left, pursued by the yelling gang.

They could not have chosen better ground for him. Once out of the light of the fire, he put forth all the fleetness of foot he had learned at the Irish fairs, and left many of his pursuers behind.

Perhaps he would have reached the river unmolested, but, as fate would have it, an outlying Indian flung himself in his path. Raising his foot, he planted it with all his force in the stomach of the Huron, who flew back as if struck by a cannon ball. Leaping over the prostrate body, he found himself seized by the heel, and tightly held. Stooping down, so that he could see where to strike, he put in a scientific shillalah blow upon the cranium of his enemy, stretching him senseless on the sod.

But, he had not yet escaped. This had occurred near the Montcalm battery; lights began to flash, and footsteps hurried toward him.

Breaking off to the south, the brave fellow ran nearly a mile, and then paused to listen. For some minutes he heard nothing, and then the panting breath of a runner sounded in his ear. The point at which he had paused was half a mile above the rapids, not far from the place where Ralph had shaken off his pursuers and taken to the canoe. The panting steps came nearer, and Pat had stepped out to strike, when the moon, shining through a rift in the forest arches, showed him the face of Ut-ta-wan.

"Dat you, Irisher?"

"Yes, it is. How the saints kem ye here?"

"Nev' you min'. No stop to talk. Huron comin'. Git 'way now, 'den talk after. Come!" and away they sped like arrows. They ran together, keeping to the west, and leaving the course of the river entirely. At last the pace of the Indian subsided into a walk.

"No use run now. T'ink we cross riber an' go to fort

Saw you run, jus' now ; break Injun head ; *glad* you break Casco's head ; hope him never mend it."

"How kem ye there?"

"Sent Ralph bone udder day. Dat bone say Eagle Eye true frien', stay by him. When left fort, go up take in canoe. Lie in bushes and wait. Bymeby, see Injun bring you out to run ; den you git away, and I goes to git help for Ralph."

The two men, after various maneuvers, stole cautiously back, and were soon in sight of the Indian camp. The savages had thought better of letting Ralph run, after the escape of the Irishman, which greatly delighted the scout. He was taken back to the tent, and was assured by the hero Casco, whose nose had received a permanent crook, that I-re-ton was well, and coming in to see him, pretty soon.

I-re-ton came in ere long, sullen and fierce, with bloody bandages about his head. A smile rested upon the face of the scout, for he knew that he had struck a good blow. Again was the prisoner led forth—this time to be bound to a post before the council-fire.

All present were not Indians. Numerous partisan rangers, who had influence over the chiefs, were in the group. They had been sent by Montcalm to do what they could for Ralph's restoration to the French.

The council-fire blazed, and the chiefs gathered silently about it. The pipe was brought out, and passed from mouth to mouth until all had smoked. All around the gathered chiefs stood a ring of dark, eager faces, whose eyes glowed in the firelight like the eyes of serpents. Not one among the braves but longed for the torture to commence.

The French looked on in silence and smoked with the rest. Children of the woods, although they hated Ralph, yet their hatred was mixed with the respect which true bravery always inspires.

At last one Indian rose, whose snow-white locks proclaimed him a patriarch of his race. His voice quivered with age. He was called the "Oak Branch."

"Brothers," he said, "we have come to do a great thing to-night. We have come to say whether the Big Elk shall endure the trial by fire. Brothers, we have been taught to hate the English. We know they are liars : that they speak

with forked tongues. We know that they love to cheat the Indians, to steal away their lands, and drive them across the big water. They take our pleasant places, and there they build their great wigwams. I have seen my great father at Quebec. He never promises, unless he means to fulfill. This young man was in his hands and he gave him up to us, though the 'soft voice' (Bowen) pleaded for his life. Brothers, the English and the Hurons can not live together. One or the other must cease from off the land. Let another speak. The Oak Branch is done."

An Indian with a sharp, cunning face, and a vindictive eye, came to his feet. Glancing around the circle, he spoke slowly, like one who weighs his words.

"My father has spoken, and his young men's ears are open. They love to hear the words of the old father. It is to their ears like the murmur of pleasant waters. But the people do not know what he means; he is very wise. He does not say, 'let the young man die,' but he means it. He will wait until others have spoken, and then he will say it. Many faces were about our last council; I look for them in vain. Where is Ish-pa-lan. At Three Rivers I heard a rifle, and he floated dead on the Oneida. This was not well. The Big Elk fired that shot. Where is the 'Lynx?' He fell in the pine woods, as he chased the murderers of his brother through them. Whose rifle brought him down? My brothers have but to look where the Big Elk stands, and they will know. Who saw O-na-da and U-nah, die? They were fleet of foot; they ran like deer. They hunted the Eagle Eye of the Onondagas almost unto death. Their wives sit in empty lodges, and wait for those who will never return. Who did this? My brothers know well. It would be pleasant if we had the Eagle Eye here. Then we could light two fires, and let them howl into each other's faces. The Elk is brave. Let him not be vexed that his friend is not here to join him. His legs are long. He will not come to the camp of the Huron. Let the pappoose no more cry for the food which can not be brought, because the Elk has slain their fathers. Let the Big Elk perish by fire."

He sat down amid a perfect whirlwind of applause. I-re-ton

sat quietly—a satisfied smile passing over his face. But, the smile changed into a frown, and that frown into a malignant scowl, as a young chief, of prepossessing look and with a majestic form, rose slowly to his feet. This was a famous orator and the bravest chief, although youngest in the circle. He looked steadily from man to man, once at the prisoner and then spoke:

“The Oak Branch and the Panther have said, ‘let the young man perish by fire!’ It is like the Oak Branch, who has lived so long that his head is turned to winter. But, why do they say this? The Panther says, they have slain our young men. That is well. When young men go out to fight they must look death in the face. Why does the Panther go out upon the war-path? Does he go to smoke a pipe, and sing? My brother does not so. He goes with knife and hatchet and rifle. Does not the Panther take scalps when they come in his way? My brother loves to take scalps. What is this I see in his belt? It is the scalp of a man who died to-night by the river. I saw him tear it from his head. What do I see beside it? It has long hair; it grew on the head of a *woman*! The Panther took it from her head:—would the Panther think it right, if he were taken in to-morrow’s battle by the whites, to be put to the trial by fire? My brother would not. Why then should this young man die so? He has done us much harm. But, have we never wronged him? As I look about me, I see the face of I-re-ton. Was it wrong for the Big Elk to strike him on the head? No, it was very good. Listen, and I will tell you why the young man struck the chief. Long ago, the chief took the scalp of the father and mother and sister of the Elk. If the young white had killed the chief, he would only have taken his revenge, for he is but the avenger of his father and mother and sister’s blood. I do not say, ‘let the young man go free.’ This would not be right. It would not be doing well by our great father, if we were to do so. He would go to the fort and tell them that we can not fire the big guns by the river, because the ‘Red Fox’ drove nails into the holes. My brothers were wrong in letting the Red Fox (Pat) go free. I would give him to the great father Montcalm. He has judged him by

his law, and he will die. But he is brave, and let him die a brave death. Let us *not* burn him with fire."

He sat down amid a murmur of approbation from the old chiefs and of dissatisfaction from the younger portion, who had been balked of their sport by Pat, and desired to make it up on the person of Ralph. Chief after chief arose, and openly advocated the surrender to the French. A smile of relief passed over the faces of the partisan leaders, who had not spoken a word. Even the Oak Branch rose again, siding with the rest. After he was done, I-re-ton rose slowly, as if in pain, and cast a look of fearful malice upon Ralph, before he addressed the council.

It is needless to paint the thrilling words and gestures by which he placed before their eyes the deaths of their friends. The wicked savage knew every vulnerable point in the armor of each Indian's heart. A cunning diplomatist, he had learned his hearers thoroughly before he spoke. He told them how ghastly looked the chief who still hung in the ragged pine. He spoke of the many who had fallen by the rifle of the scout. He lifted his own maimed hand, as a sign of his cruel work. Unconsciously he won them over to his cause, and then at once called for their vote, before they had time to recover from the thrall in which his presence bound them. All but the young orator voted, DEATH.

In vain he and the French officers begged the council to reconsider its verdict, but all said the white man must die in the morning by fire.

Ralph was led back into the lodge, and strongly bound. The Frenchmen came and spoke kindly to him, together with the young chief, whom Ralph took by the hand and thanked for the part he had taken. I-re-ton came in after they were gone, and looked at him with the stare of fixed hatred. Ralph sent him a glance from his bold eye under which the wretch quailed, and shrunk back, but only for a moment. Recovering his presence of mind the savage began to taunt his victim.

"The Elk has long legs, but he can run no more, for they are tired."

"The Elk has long arms too," replied Ralph, determined to meet the fellow in his own way. "Is the head

of my brother in pain, that he ties it up with bloody rags?"

The blazing eyes of the chief seemed fairly to illuminate the darkness of the place. "The Elk is a woman," he shouted, mad with anger. "He has a long tongue. I-re-ton can not beat him with his tongue; *he* is not a woman. But his hands are strong."

"I-re-ton *is* a woman. His hands are those of a pappoose. He is afraid of the Elk. He dare not meet him in battle. The Elk will go out now, give I-re-ton a hatchet and a knife, and fight him with his bare hands."

"Hark!" said the chief, coming close up to him, and speaking eagerly, blinded by rage. "Will the Elk do so?"

"It is spoken," said Ralph, adopting the brief speech of the Indian.

"I will fight him; only the Elk shall have a knife, and I-re-ton will leave his hatchet in the lodge. Let my brother rest well, and in an hour I-re-ton will come."

"Shall we go out alone?"

"There shall be none to see us."

The lodge-curtain dropped behind the chief, and he was gone. Ralph sat in a fever of excitement. He had great hope from this meeting with the chief. True, he might die, but what of that? There was a good chance for life, and, at the best, he would not then perish by the fire torture. It would not be the first time he had joined hand to hand in battle with an Indian. He counted the minutes as they passed, certain, if the chief failed to come, that he had looked upon his last earthly night. He heard the stealthy tread of the red guards; the blaze of the watch-fire outside was thrown across the blanket. Thinking of her and of the coming conflict, he fell asleep.

Hardly did he sleep, when some one lifted the curtain of the wigwam. It was the Mohawk, accompanied by another Indian. It was not yet light, for objects in the lodge looked dim. I-re-ton beckoned the scout to rise; he did so, and the companion of the chief began to array him in his own dress. He understood now that the Mohawk meant to keep faith with him, and that he was to leave the camp in the guise of an Indian.

When he was ready, his strange *valet-de-chambre*, robed himself in the forsaken garments, and lay down upon his blanket, turning his face to the wall. I-re-ton made another quick motion, and, muffling his face, followed his inveterate enemy from the lodge. It was that uncertain hour between morning and night, in which every thing wears a hazy aspect. The guards never noticed them, or, if they did, only saw in them the two chiefs who had entered the lodge a few moments before.

I-re-ton led the way with rapid steps down toward the river. There they found a canoe and crossed to the other side. Stepping out at the base of the cliff, the chief trod up a slippery path, and Ralph followed closely upon his heels. Once on the level land above, the leader struck off into the thick woods, and pursued his course for half a mile. Neither as yet had spoken a word. Both were pondering on their chances in the coming fight, and did not care to talk. Half an hour's walk brought them to a little glade in the woods, shut in by tall trees on every hand. Here the chief paused, and flinging back his blanket, looked Ralph in the eye.

Much, in this strange combat, there is to remind us of Rhoderick Dhu:

“And here his course the chieftain staid,
Threw down his helmet and his plaid,
And to the Saxon warrior said:
“Bold Saxon, to his promise just,
Vich Alpine hath discharged his trust,—
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel!
For this is Coilantogle's ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword.”

I-re-ton, though a bold and now thoroughly furious enemy, had a man before him who did not know what it was to fear. Warren took the knife from the hand of his red foe, stepped back a few paces, took a single look at the sky brightening through the leaves, and addressed himself to fight.

Both expert backwoodsmen, it was wildly interesting to see them close slowly in, with knives prepared for battle. The position each took was suggestive of his manner of fighting. I-re-ton, with a firm but catlike step, held his knife advanced, and inclined his body forward ready for a sly cut or

thrust. Ralph, on the contrary, threw back his shoulders, and held his blade as if about to parry for the head, so that he might cut or guard, as he chose. Poising himself upon one heel, he swung slowly round, keeping his face toward I-re-ton, who walked stealthily about him, not yet daring to close, but narrowing the circle each time. The scout was in no hurry; he was getting strong again from the restraint of his confinement, and felt himself even then a match for his enemy. I-re-ton, seeing that he would not open the attack, prepared to close.

Ralph knew by the quick, vindictive gleam of the fierce eye what was about to come. The muscles of the Indian's limbs were tense and hard, like those of a panther about to spring. He came like a flash of light, but he was met as quickly; for, as he flung himself forward, the body of the scout shot into the air, and he planted both feet on the breast of the Indian, with a force which he partially avoided by a single backward step. Nevertheless it was a terrible blow, and for a moment the Mohawk reeled back, dizzy, blind and faint, uttering a yell of rage. But, recovering quickly, he rushed in again before Ralph could repeat the blow, and began an attack at close quarters. Foot to foot, the two enemies fought for life. The straining muscle, the angry, panting breath, the hiss and clash of steel, were the only sounds heard. The birds flew scared from the branches, startled at the unusual din. The buckskin hunting-shirt of I-re-ton was reddening in two spots, one on the shoulder, and the other on the breast, where the weapon of Ralph had pierced him. The scout was wounded in the arm, and the blood was dripping from his fingertips. Breaking away for a moment, the two took breath before they closed again. One strong stroke and the knife of Ralph is shivered at the hilt. With a savage grin, I-re-ton raised his knife, but the arm of the Big Elk tightened around his antagonist, the blade was torn from his hand and flung far out into the bushes, and they struggled for the throw. Here the scout was at home. His limbs were stronger than those of the Indian, who, though lithe and active, had to bend to his gigantic strength. In an instant he was hurled to the ground, half-stunned. But lying there,

he gave utterance to a signal-cry, when four Indians burst from the woods, and attacked the weary man together.

The treacherous nature of the chief would have its way. I-re-ton was sorry, as soon as he was calm, that he had promised to fight the scout alone, and had sent these four braves secretly to the place of meeting, to aid him in case of need.

The scout was not dismayed. Striking I-re-ton a stunning blow with his fist, which made him quiescent enough, he braced himself to a new battle.

How it would have ended, it is easy to assume. His opponents were each nearly as strong as I-re-ton, and would soon have conquered him, for he was nearly exhausted. But help was at hand.

The Onondaga had been busy all that night in company with Mooney. When they had completed the circle of the camp, and witnessed the proceedings of the council, they set out toward the prison-lodge. The guards had gone to the council with their prisoner, so that they had no difficulty in gaining the back of the lodge and cutting small holes in the bark. While they could work they were busy, and a square piece of bark, leaving a hole through which a man might crawl easily enough, was left hanging by small strips. This, it was hoped, Ralph would discover, and, availing himself of it, would be able to avoid the guards and make for the woods or river.

Soon after, Ralph was brought in again, as they discovered from their retreat in this deep gloom around. It was not the place to remain, however, and the two soon set out on a dead run for the river, which they safely reached and crossed and then tarried to await the further issue of events. In an hour's time four Indians went by. Soon after, they saw the canoe of I-re-ton leave the shore, and to their great joy, Ralph was a passenger! Neither of them for a moment thought of interrupting the movement, whose nature neither could fathom. Eagle Eye, however, surmised that some treachery was on foot, and determined to follow, at all hazards. Without discovery they kept the Mohawk chief in view, and saw the fight from the first.

When Ralph struck the first blow, it was as much as the

Irishman could do to keep from uttering a shout, while the face of the Indian took on a look resembling a smile. When they saw him hurl the chief to the earth, they were about to come out and join their friend when the new foes made their sudden appearance!

The yell of the Onondaga, and the cheering call of Pat, were simultaneous, and to Ralph's great astonishment and delight, these true friends ranged themselves by his side, one holding knife and hatchet, and the other a stout cudgel, which he had cut while following the trail. The four Mohawks stopped in something like dismay. They knew only too well the prowess of Eagle Eye and the Elk; while, having been in the line, the previous night, when Pat ran the gantlet, they had a wholesome dread of the shillalah.

"Ah-ha-a-a! Ye black bastes, look at that now. D'ye see the little bit av a stick I hould in me fist? Wud ye like to shry wud it hurt ye? Come on, ye thaves, come on! and by the widdy Murphy's lip, and that's a hairy oath, I'll break the heads of ye, ivery wan. Come on, thin, ye nasty, grasey children av the ould divil that ye are!"

The savages turned and ran for the woods, while the two fresh men started in pursuit. But Ralph called them back.

"Come back, chief," he said. "I don't feel like fighting just now."

The Indian paused.

"Hurt?" questioned he.

"Not much, chief, but a few of your herbs will come into play. Let us see what you can do to stop the blood."

"Les look," said he, betraying some anxiety.

The scout stripped the buckskin from the wounded arm with some pain, and the Indian looked at the cut. With a guttural "ugh!" he hunted around, and found some herbs, which, with the aid of Pat, he bruised and laid on the wound. This done, he bound them firmly in their place with pieces of buckskin. So busy were they that they forgot the crushed worm which lay almost at their feet. The Onondaga was first to perceive any thing wrong, for all at once he grasped his rifle, and started off into the woods; then, seeming to remember his wounded friend, he came back with an angry face—*I-re-ton had escaped!*

Taking advantage of the moment when both eyes and hands were busy over the wound, the wounded Mohawk had crawled into the bushes, and made off as fast as his failing strength would let him. The four Indians, who still lurked in the woods, took him in their arms and hurried away. So that when the Onondaga noticed his absence, they had put some distance between him and danger.

The brow of the Onondaga was clouded. He considered it a severe blow to his credit that the enemy had escaped under his very eyes. He finished the dressing of his friend's wound, and then went a little way out upon the bloody trail. When he reached the spot where the four had joined their wounded leader, he paused, knowing that it was useless to follow them further. Pat was in a terrible rage, crinating himself in true Irish style, for a blockhead, in not keeping an eye on the Indian. Ralph took the matter in a more quiet manner.

"Never mind, chief," he said. "He is off, and no mistake. What a fool I was not to knock him on the head. I thought I hit him hard enough. The fellow has as many lives as a cat."

"Les go," said the Indian, sulkily. "No use stay here no longer."

"Where shall we go?"

"Not go to Shirley. French got *him*."

"What!"

"Got him, tell you, by dis time. Know dat our men leave las' night, cross Onondaga."*

In his concise manner, he related every event of that day and night, so fraught with trouble to many hearts—the shooting of the Huron in the tree, and the fierce fight upon the river-bank, together with the capture of the major.

"You think he was taken by the French?"

"Sure av it," said Pat.

"What did Clara think?" he asked of the chief.

"Wild Rose very sad. T'ink you dead, now. Major told her dat Indians got you. Den las' night major taken, ail

* The river now known as the Oswego, was, at that time, called the Onondaga. From the depth of water and the situation among the great tribes, it was very important. The Onondaga proper is about twenty miles in length, formed by the junction of the rivers Oneida and Seneca at the point called "Three Rivers."

friend's gone. Very sad. Injun feels sorry, face gets so white. Den I come away."

"I must go to the fort."

"Mus' go?"

"Yes."

"Den we go too. Come!"

And the three turned to the right, made a circuit of the French pickets, and reached the fort in safety.

Clara had indeed given them up. It seemed to her that she could not weep even. Her father, her lover, all she had on earth, had fallen into the hands of the enemy. She sat in her room, with her head upon her knees, & was fully up to despair.

The morning rays were shining into her window. She thought the same sun shed its light upon the mangled form of her lover. She thought of her brave father, in like cruel hands. What would be his fate?

All at once there rose a loud cheer at the outposts. She never raised her head, until, borne on the morning breeze, she heard glad cries of, "Warren! Warren!! Hurrah!" She could see a struggling crowd about the sallyport; then some one on the stairs said: "Let him pass, boys, she has had trouble enough, poor girl." She waited in a strange tremor, half in hope, half in fear. The door opened; Ralph's voice called her name, and she fell fainting into his arms.

Joy seldom kills; and she came back to consciousness to find him holding and chafing her white hands, kissing her lips, with her head resting upon his manly breast—resting as she had given up all hope of ever resting again. She lay there like a tired child, while he solemnly laid his compassionate kisses on brow and cheek and lip.

"Oh, Ralph," she said, "Go is very good, to give you back to me. I told father, when he brought me news of your capture, that he was all I had, and now he is taken, and you are given to me, Ralph. What will they do with him?"

"The French have him, not the Indians; and I have no doubt he will be exchanged soon. As for myself, I can not stay with you long, for I have work to do."

"You surely do not mean to go out among the Indians again. What would they do to you, if you were taken now?"

"No, I shall keep clear of them. My chief object in going

out, is to keep out of their way. The place will be given up to-day, I think, and I do not care to be in it. Montcalm might have something to say to me, and even if he did not, a hundred such men could not save me from Iroquois, if he found me in the fort."

"Where will you go?"

"I shall take a canoe, and go down the lake with the Onondaga. I will watch the movements of the troops, and if Montcalm paroles them, I will join you further down. If, on the contrary, he takes you all to Quebec, I will go to Albany, and wait for you there."

"You will quit this life, then?"

"I think so. I am tired of wandering. While I was at Edward, I saw the famous partisan colonel, whom we call 'Old Put.' His real name is Israel Putnam. He is the most daring man I ever saw. He commands the finest body of men in the service—the Rangers, they are called—and he offered me a captaincy in the regiment. I like it, and think I shall accept."

"I have heard of Colonel Putnam, and think I should like him. What kind of a man is he?"

"A bluff, hearty, whole-souled man, a perfect soldier, and a provincial."

"You *must* go, I know. God bless you, my dear Ralph. Be very careful of yourself, for my sake."

He left her, and went down into the fort. After shaking hands with every man, woman and child whom he saw—for all knew and loved him—he was joined by the Indian, and they left the place together. The French had not yet completed the investment, and the two rangers easily made their way to the woods.

The day was spent in a fierce battle; but, toward night, the firing ceased, and a flag came into the fort. He had come to offer fresh terms from Montcalm, who appreciated their brave defense of the post, and was willing to give them the award of brave men. They were to be allowed to march out, with their arms, and join the garrison at Fort Edward. The officers to retain their side-arms, and all giving a parole to fight no more until exchanged. The young officer pleaded hard that these terms might be accepted, for, he said, unless they

were complied with, the marquis would be forced, much against his will, to order an assault. If this were done, no prisoners would be taken.

These, better terms than the colonel looked for, were accepted, and Baron Moran came in soon after and took formal possession of the place. Many cannon, the shipping in the harbor, and vast quantities of munitions of war, fell into the hands of the French. Then followed an act which, coupled with his cruel breach of faith at Fort Edward, renders the name of Montcalm infamous in the annals of these wars. Fourteen men, chosen by lot from the prisoners, were given into the hands of the Hurons! These unfortunate men were taken into the woods, and there tortured to death at the post, their cries ringing in the ears of the garrison and of the French commander. Moran smote his hands together, and said to the colonel:

"As God is my judge, sir, this work is none of mine."

"I believe you," said the other, warmly. "But yonder is a deed that will blaze on the pages of history for its atrocity and infamy."

Next morning the garrison marched out, and put twenty miles between them and their now doubly detestable enemy before a halt, camping upon the Oneida, at Three-river Point. Wearied with the incessant toil of the last few days, they set their sentinels, and lay down to sleep.

The night was beautiful, and the drowsy sentinels nodded at their posts. They remembered Ralph's injunction, to beware of surprises and Indian incursions, but, with two broad rivers in their rear, it is no wonder that, what sleepy watching was done by them, was given to the side toward the lake. Clara had a tent near the river, where, with the murmur of its water in her ears, she lay down to an unbroken slumber, happier than she had been for days. True, she was yet in danger, but her lover was safe, and her father, at best, only a prisoner. She did not see the canoe glide noiselessly forward among the pines. Neither did the guard, on the other side of the tent, dreaming of home and friends. She was lying on a pile of blankets, sleeping peacefully. One round white arm was underneath her head, and the other reposed upon the blanket. She had no knowledge of the dark form which glided

into the tent, and stood above her, gloating on her charms. Then he lifted her head gently, and, ere she was awake, a bandage was firmly drawn over the mouth. Taking her cautiously in his arms, so as not to arouse her, he placed her in the canoe. Once he stopped and looked back at the sleeping sentry. The desire to take a scalp was overcome by its danger. Taking his station in the canoe, he pushed from the shore. The quick paddles did his work well, and the grim ferryman, I-re-ton soon landed upon the point.

Lifting his prisoner out upon the shore, he gave the canoe a push with his foot, which sent it out into the current, down which it soon dropped out of sight. Then he turned to his prisoner, and lifting her again, took his course toward the south as rapidly as his burden would permit.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CLOSING SCENE.

RALPH came into the camp in company with the chief on the morning following the abduction. All was in confusion; men were running hither and thither without any definite object, and excitement was written on all faces.

"What is the matter here, Barnes?" asked Ralph, as that worthy was rushing by.

"That you, Ralph? Oh, I don't dare to tell."

"What is the matter, I say?"

"Miss Clara! Got away last night, strayed away, drowned, lost or something. I don't know."

"What do you mean, you fool," he gasped, forgetting politeness in his excitement, and taking the fellow by the shoulder.

"See here, *you*! Perhaps you think it necessary to take a piece out of my shoulder to make me understand, but I assure you that it isn't. Let go my arm, will you? *I* didn't steal her."

"Where was she?" he repeated, releasing the orderly.

"Come here, then, and I will show you," the red-coat answered, rubbing his shoulder with a rueful face. The two

scouts followed him, and he led the way to the tent which Clara had occupied the night before. The colonel stood there; he shook Ralph kindly by the hand, as he came forward.

"This is a strange occurrence, Ralph," he said.

"When was it done?"

"Last night. The sentry swears that no one passed him. Of course I have no proof, but it is my opinion that he was asleep. Early this morning he found that she was not in the tent, and gave the alarm."

Ralph went into the tent, and glanced about him with a critical eye.

"Have these things been disturbed?"

"No. Every thing was just in this situation when I came in. What is your opinion?"

"That your sentry was right in one particular. The person who entered this tent last night—and a person did enter it—came through this hole, which none of you have seen." He exhibited a rent in the canvas about three feet long, which had been cut with a knife. "Clara had lain down, and, undoubtedly was sleeping soundly when this thing occurred. She was doubtless very tired, and lay down with her clothes on, as you see that not an article of her apparel is here. She was taken from the tent by one person—and he was an Indian—and was carried through this opening."

"Why do you say it was an Indian?"

"Do you see that footmark near the blankets? When he stooped to lift her, he bore all his weight upon that foot. Then the scout stooped, and examined the footmark closely. As he did so a look of intense rage passed over his face, as he cried: '*I-re-ton!*'"

"Impossible," said the colonel. "You certainly can not identify him from a single foot-mark."

"It is I-re-ton. Come here, chief, and tell me what you think."

Ut-ta-wan came, and kneeling by the footprint, examined it closely.

"One man here. Take young squaw. Creep in like snake, den go out—dis way,"—pointing to the rent in the canvas.

With bent bodies, the two now passed out at the opening,

reading the trail as they went. It led them down to the water's edge, where the Indian was first to discover the mark of the canoe upon the river-bank. The Mohawk had been careless, for he knew that the two scouts were not in the camp, and supposed they had gone to Albany. His footprints were thick in the mud upon the verge.

"What tribe, chief?" said Ralph.

"Mohawk," said the other, quickly. "I-re-ton!"

"How does he know that?" asked the colonel.

"When you have followed the woods as long as myself you will know that the fashion of the moccasin is different in each tribe. Now, I will give you my theory of this sad business. I-re-ton undoubtedly was very much out of favor with the Hurons by the time he reached camp. After fighting so hard at the council to get me burned at the stake, and then taking me out to fight him, and in that way letting me escape, made it bad for him. Very probably he has broken with them, and was coming down this way to get his revenge alone. It was doubtless a preconceived plan on his part."

Ralph was right. On the return of the Mohawk to camp, the Hurons angrily demanded their prisoner at his hands. Of course, he could give them no satisfaction, and a council was called. Every one turned against him; the Panther and Oak Branch, his best friends, accused him to his face. The young orator galled him by his sarcastic speeches, until, mad with anger, the Mohawk rose and told them that he would march with them no more. The council never heeded him, but went on with their work, and then took a vote by which the Mohawk was banished from the camp.

Just as the vote was given, a young Mohawk runner came into the camp. The late deeds of I-re-ton had been such as to awaken feelings of respect in his own tribe, and the decree of banishment, some time before pronounced by a council of Mohawks, was revoked. He was also summoned to a seat at their council-fire, and the runner was dispatched with the summons.

His farewell was pithy, and characteristic of the man:

"Let my Huron brothers cease to fret. There are those who love the chief yet. Behold, the young man has come

from the council of the Mohawk. They say, let I-re-ton return; a lodge is open for him, and he shall again teach our young men how to make war; he is very welcome.

"My Huron brothers have made me a war-chief; this is good, and I would have left my brothers with a fullheart. I have lost much blood, and my hands are not strong, but, if there is one among the Hurons who dare meet I-re-ton with knife or hatchet, let him come on; the Mohawk chief is ready!"

Furious yells arose, and several sprung to take up the gantlet thus thrown down, but the old chiefs interposed.

"Let him go," they said, "he is banished."

I-re-ton turned, and, with a haughty step, left the spot. He hung upon the trail of the English, and at night stole Clara from the tent.

Ralph turned to the colonel.

"We must follow I-re-ton at once. He has crossed the river, and, by this time, is some distance on his way. He will perhaps go back to the Mohawk country with her."

"How many men will you take?"

"Not one."

"You don't mean it?"

"Not a man. They would only be in my way. You have not a dozen men in your command with whom I would trust myself in the woods. They break sticks and burn wet wood. They have a peculiar faculty for getting others into trouble. And now, sir, let me give you a word of advice that may be useful to you on your way. March at once for Edward. Do not halt a day on my account, for I shall be down as soon as I have done my work. I will have Clara, if I follow this Mohawk scoundrel to Quebec. Tell them that Ralph Warren said the French would try to take Fort William Henry after Oswego. And if *they* act as usual, they will take it, too. Good-by, colonel, and look out for your men. Trust no thicket until you have sent your riflemen into it. These devils will lurk in every ambush, and you will lose many men at their hands, without you use extreme caution and haste."

Beckoning to Eagle Eye, the two thrust out a log from the shore, laid their rifles upon it, and swam across. Ten minutes

were spent in searching for the trail. They found it after a little time, and raising their hands, in token of success, darted off into the woods.

The trail was a broad one, which the scouts had not calculated on getting so easily. Following the erroneous idea that these two dangerous men had been sent to Albany I-re-ton took no pains to cover his movements. After leaving the river, he carried his prisoner far into the woods. Then he put her down, and the bandage was removed from her mouth. She was unconscious—having fainted from fright and a sense of suffocation. After a few moments her eyes unclosed and at once she realized the terrors of her situation.

"Why have you brought me here?" she exclaimed.

"By-me-by you know, not now. S'pose you keep still, make no noise, else me kill." He touched the knife in his belt.

"What do you propose to do with me?" she continued, without heeding his threat.

"Go wid I-re-ton, keep wigwam warm. I-re-ton great chief. Got two squaw now. Wigwam large; room for more. White girl mus' go. Udder squaw do what she say; n' not, me kill. White girl be squaw to great chief, den."

This was too much of a revelation for the poor girl's self-control, and she burst into tears.

"No be rool?" cried the chief, angrily. "I-re-ton great chief. Mohawk love him now. Send young brave last sun, and say: 'Let the chief come back to his tents; his brethren love him, because he has taken many scalps. Go dere now. Couldn't go while Hendricks was dere. Him *big* fool! T'ink Johnson know ebbery t'ing; fight, get kill. Me kill him, self! Dey kill Deeskau dere, ole French chief. Me go back to Mohawk, now Hendricks dead."

"I can not go with you," pleaded Clara. "Let me go back to my people. You surely would not have an unwilling wife in your lodge. See, our skins are not alike; mine is white, and yours is dark. Your customs are not mine. I could not live with your people. Send me back and you shall be made rich in rifle and powder and ball. Ask what you will; only send me back to my people."

"Blood just de same," said the chief. "Skin darker, know

dat, but blood red. Dat makes no difference. Just as well have *white* squaw. *Rudder* hab *one* white squaw."

"But, I can not go with you. I will not move a step. Kill me if you will, but I am of another race than you."

The Indian snatched out his hatchet with blazing eyes, and seemed about to slay her. But she faced him calmly, with folded arms, as one who had no fear to look upon her death. Indeed, she thought it would be a merciful blow which would free her from the living death for which she seemed doomed. She had no hope to escape. She thought Ralph would not join the army until it reached the Mohawk, and then what hope had he of finding the trail. She was lost, beyond redemption. Perhaps he read her thoughts in her eyes, for he put up his tomahawk, saying: "White girl fool! Mus' go. Not walk, den mus' carry."

He took her in his arms again, but rather than be contaminated by his touch, she said she would walk. He put her down, and she followed him through the woods. Although having little hope of being followed by any rescuing party, the brave girl broke off twigs to guide any who *might* follow, stamped her heel from time to time, to mark the path more plainly still. I-re-ton did not notice this, only looking back from time to time to see if she followed closely. After a while she began to lag, and he called to her to quicken her pace.

"I am tired," said she, "and must rest. I can not walk like an Indian."

I-re-ton looked at the sky, and seeing that it was nearly noon, he made a halt, and taking his pouch gave her some dried venison and parched corn. She was hungry, and the simple meal was eaten with a relish. Then he went away a moment, and came back with some water in a horn cup which he carried in his pouch. She tasted it, and looked up in surprise.

"Drink," said the chief, "it will do you good."

"I do not like it," replied she.

"Great medicine. Tell you, drink much; make you strong. Medicine of Onondaga."*

* They were now upon the Salt Marsh near the present city of Syracuse, in the town of Salina. The drink he gave her doubtless was the Chlorine water which is being turned to advantage by some sharp doctor. Any one

They rested an hour, and then started on. The chief had gone low down the country, lest he should meet the Onondagas. They were now nearing the head-waters of the Mohawk, and there they rested for the night. I-re-ton had not the least apprehension of pursuit by the English. The two dread scouts, Eagle Eye and Big Elk, being out of the way, he feared none others, and deemed his way clear. The place where they passed the night was near Oneida, on the river about half-way down from Syracuse. Clara was very weary; and after she had again eaten of the parched corn, she sunk into a restless slumber. They had traveled thirty miles that day. The grim chief sat down, and looked at his sleeping charge as she lay with her head resting on her arm, and her hair floating softly over her bare white shoulder. He did not sleep, but, through the long night sat with his back against a tree, until the gray light of the morning began to fall upon the spot.

Then he roused her, and again served a ration of meat and corn. This eaten they went on their way. Where Canada Creek joins the Mohawk, he broke off from the main stream and went on toward the country of the Mohawks. That night they rested near Trenton Falls, with the roar of the cataract sounding in their ears.

Meanwhile, the scouts had not been idle. They followed hard during the day, laughing in their hearts when they found the imprint of her tiny heel ground upon the earth. They also marked the broken twigs she left behind, and, at Salina, found the footprints of I-re-ton near the spring. Ralph already had fathomed his design of going to the Mohawk country; so, sending Eagle Eye by way of Oneida Castle, to cut off the Mohawk upon the only other path he could take, the young scout went on by the river at his best speed. He had at first expected the Mohawk to go to Oswego, but was happily disappointed. The chance of being a great man in his tribe again had been too much for the renegade, and he

passing through the depot in Syracuse, will be attracted by a stunning picture, representing the Chlorine Springs, with the baths attached, in which sundry nymphs are disporting themselves pleasantly. Little dreamed Clara Bowen, in the midst of that primeval wilderness, drinking the mineral water, that a great source of wealth lay under her very feet, in the shape of the salt springs which, until lately, furnished half the salt of the United States.

now sought to return to his own people. The longer the route he took, the more chance there was of rescuing Clara from his hands.

While the Mohawk was resting on the bank of Canada Creek, the scout was within a few miles, cautiously following the trail. Far off he heard the cry of the whippowil, and he knew that his friend was near at hand, and answered. Twenty minutes passed, and Eagle Eye joined him.

"Have you found them?"

"Ober dere," he replied.

"Is Clara with him?"

"Yes, her dere."

Ralph sprung up lightly. "Let us go." But the chief laid a restraining grasp upon his arm.

"Not go," he said. "I-re-ton hear, kill white girl. Wait till day come; watch him close, creep up when no t'ink, den all be good."

Ralph saw the wisdom of the suggestion, and, wrapping his blanket about him, waited the coming of the morning. He passed a sleepless night, rising often to peer out into the gloom, toward the spot where his beloved reposed. With the first gleam of morning, he was on the trail.

That was useless to them now. Half a mile away, the smoke of the Indian's fire rose slowly. He was now in the Mohawk country, and all danger seemed fully past. His camp was upon the bank of the black stream, behind a huge boulder of limestone. Twenty feet below, the rapid stream, broken into a succession of beautiful cascades, flowed on. In the midst of the highest rapid, a great boulder had been heaved upward, and when the swift water struck it, it spouted into the air to the height of twelve feet, changing color as it spread out in the rays. First black, then dark green, light green, yellow, and finally the purest white. The girl left the side of the chief, and gazed on the beautiful scene in wonder and delight. I-re-ton sat stoically smoking by the fire, watching her movements and fro. Soon she came back and seated herself by the fire on the other side. A strange look had come into her eyes. Her cheek was very pale, but her glance was firm and strong.

"Let the chief hear me," she said, adopting the language

of the race. "I am but a weak woman, and he is a man, but let him listen to what she has to say."

"The ears of the chief are open," he replied, rather shortly; "he can hear."

"The chief has taken me captive. He may be sure that I will never come into his lodge. A white woman will sooner lose her life than to mate with an Indian. Why will not the chief listen. He shall be made rich in all that an Indian covets. He shall go back to his tribe with many blankets and rifles. Will he let the white girl go free?"

"Nebber do dat. Must go to Injun's wigwan."

"Coward! I defy you." Leaping away, she disappeared like a flash of light from his vision. He bounded to the bank's verge. The bushes overhung the rock below, and he could not see the path which he knew was underneath. She had dropped ten feet upon it. Without a moment's thought he sprung after her.

The place where he landed was the narrow path down which tourists now go, grasping at the chain along the wall. Only the creeping vines served him for a support. He could not see her, and the hard limestone gave back no echoing footsteps.

Mad with rage, he ran along the ravine to the foot of the principal fall. No trace. With the certainty that she had thrown herself into the water, he retraced his steps. He was nearly to the top of the cliff when he was appalled by the vision of an Indian, whose face he knew too well, coming down to meet him. It was the Onondaga.

In that deadly glance which shot across the intervening space, each read the purpose of the other. I-re-ton had no arms but his hatchet and knife, for he had left his rifle by the fire above him. The brave Onondaga saw this, and flung his own aside, and leaped out to meet his foe. Three paces asunder, they halted, each looking into the other's eyes.

"What does the Eagle of the Onondaga here? Is he tired of living? Let him make ready then, for his end is near?"

"Ut-ta-wan is here, and he comes to kill the murderer of women. Before you die, tell me where is the white maiden."

"Find her if the black river will give her up to you. The tumbling river never gives up its dead."

Eagle Eye set his teeth and advanced cautiously toward his opponent. The place where they fought was full of danger. Above, the rocky wall rose many feet into the air; as far below them roared the river. The ledge below where they stood was barely three feet wide.

I-re-ton drew his tomahawk from his belt and poised it in his hand, balancing back and forth. Perhaps he meant to throw it, but the Onondaga leaped suddenly upon him, and it flew from his hand and dropped into the river. Both drew their knives and struck a single blow, and then the knife-hand of each sunk into the other's palm, which closed like a vice about it. Step by step the Onondaga forced his antagonist back along the ledge, meaning to get him to the wider space below the fall, where they could fight to better advantage. Once he loosened his left hand, and struck him in the face, and then seized his arm again. I-re-ton tried the same experiment and received a sharp cut in the shoulder before he could grasp it again. Once he tripped the Mohawk and fell heavily upon him, a trick he had learned from Ralph himself. The breath of I-re-ton was coming short, for he had not the iron strength of his antagonist. But he struggled up from his knees and forced his enemy resolutely backward.

Again the Onondaga struck his feet from under him, and they fell, this time close to the edge of the rock. At the same time Ralph came springing down to the rescue of his friend. I-re-ton saw him, saw that his days were numbered, and breaking away once more, regardless of the knife buried to the hilt in his breast, he seized Ut-ta-wan by the breast of his hunting-shirt. Both read his purpose in his eye. Hopeless himself, reading death in the eyes of the scout and his companion, he only looked to die in company with his hated foe; and so, when he had seized the Onondaga firmly, he flung himself resolutely backward, with the design of dragging the red scout with him into the foaming gulf.

Ralph saw the danger of his friend in time. Grasping firmly a hanging vine with his left hand, he extended the other quickly to his friend, who was tottering on the very brink. I-re-ton, still living, though with a knife driven through his breast, saw that his attempt had failed, and, with a warrior's pride, as Ut-ta-wan would have held him for his scalp, he

relinquished his hold, and fell back into the abyss. The waters closed above his head, and all that had been the famous renegade was drifting, fearfully mangled, down into the Mohawk.

"Where is she, chief?" asked Ralph, in a husky voice.

"Don' know; *he* say she dere," he pointed to the water.

"P'raps he lie; p'raps not. Saw her jump; not know where she go. You go down-stream; me go up."

Ralph went down the stream a mile, but found no trace of his lost one. The old rocks echoed to her name, but she did not answer. Meantime, the other passed the great waterfall, and ran up the ravine a long distance, like his friend, without result. In coming back, his keen eye discovered, lying on the leaves, a memento of her. It was the locket Ralph had sent back to her, when he was a prisoner in the hands of the French. This told him that she had not fallen from the ledge, and that she had gone up the stream. His shrill whoop recalled Ralph, who soon stood by him, holding the relic in his hand.

"She has gone up the stream," said Ralph; "let us follow her."

"Ralph!" cried a sweet voice close at hand. "Dear Ralph."

An exclamation of joy broke from his lips, and he turned toward the fall, for the voice seemed to come from the midst of the water. Then he remembered that, when at home, he had told her of this place, and how a ledge ran along behind the falling sheet. She was there, and springing through the foam of the waterfall, he emerged with her, dripping like a Naiad, in his arms.

She had caught a glimpse of Ut-ta-wan when he passed by the fall, but, through the indistinct medium, she thought him I-re-ton, and let him pass; but when she heard the voice of Ralph, she had called to him at once.

"You look tired, dearest."

"I am tired, Ralph," she said, leaning her head upon his shoulder; "tired and footsore."

"You must rest," said he, "until we have built a canoe. Have you courage to ride down-stream in one?"

"I think I am never afraid when you are by, Ralph," she answered.

"We will build it safe and strong." She watched them with eager interest as they brought down the bark and cedar boughs, and fashioned their frail bark. They were rapid workmen, and by night the canoe was ready. But they did not care to go till morning; so the lovers sat down in the shadow. The chief went away from the spot. He was gone nearly an hour; when he came back he brought a half-dozen pheasants in his hand. A fire was kindled on the rocks, and they enjoyed the meal famously. Then resting her head upon his knees, she slept a happy, innocent sleep, while her lover counted it payment for all his pains and sorrows to see her lying there, with her head upon his knee. Night never to be forgotten. Trouble might come upon them, but that night they could not cease to remember, in any after pain.

With morning the canoe was launched, and they made their way down the river. At the portages, the two men carried the canoe between them, while she walked cheerfully by their side.

They overtook the army at Edward. The colonel came out of the fort, and took Clara in his arms, as if she had been his own child.

"Are you strong enough to bear something I have to tell you about *him*?"

She knew who he meant at once. "Tell me, tell me," she gasped, her lips growing white as ashes. "Any thing rather than suspense."

He took her by the hand and led her into his quarters. A man, sitting with his back to the door, rose as she entered, holding out his arms. She gave one look, like a startled bird, uttered a joyful cry, and sunk into them. It was Major Bowen!

It seemed that Montcalm had claimed him from the Indians, after the fort was taken, had set him free on parole, and sent him, under escort, to Fort Edward—the party bringing him proceeding thence to Crown Point. Thus, in the providence of God, those who had seemed to be lost to Clara forever, were brought back to her.

Her lover came in soon after, accompanied by a full-faced, determined looking man, in the dress of the rangers so famous in the history of these times. That man was Israel Putnam—"Old Put," of revolutionary memory—who was then in

command of this, the most efficient body of Indian fighters on the frontiers.

"I am going to stop this scouting on the part of Ralph Warren, now and forever," said he, in his bluff, plain way, "and so I have taken forcible possession of him, thrust a commission as captain in my rangers into his pocket, and he shall serve in it, I swear. And another thing, Major Bowen—come here a moment, if Miss Clara will excuse us."

"You are plotting, I believe, Major Putnam," laughed Clara, "but go on; I will console myself with the loss by talking with the colonel."

"No, you won't," replied the major. "Come here, colonel, I want you. Ralph, *you* talk to her. Now, major—"

He led the way to the other side of the room, and taking the major by the button, said:

"Now, major, what I want is, to have these young people comfortably married. They are just made for one another, and if any body deserves your jewel of a daughter, it is Ralph! See how nobly he worked for her, and what dangers he rescued her from. They *must* be married, major."

"Just as you say, Major Putnam. These young folks are betrothed, and any time they can make up their minds that it is right to step off, I am not the man to stand in their way."

"Well, Ralph, what does she say?" demanded "Old Put," turning sharply upon him. Ralph flushed as red as Clara. "Hum," said "Old Put," "I guess it is all right, and we might as well have in the chaplain."

"It seems to me you are disposing of me at a fine rate, Major Putnam," cried Clara, plucking up spirit.

"Rebellion, flat rebellion," replied "Put." "This won't do. Have in the chaplain, Mr. Orderly," he said to Barnes, who had come in, and stood grinning at the door. "Don't stand there, you monkey."

Barnes disappeared instantly, as most men would when told to do so by "Old Put." The chaplain came in, and these two who had suffered so much for each other, were made man and wife. And they were happy, because they had loved much.

Eagle Eye stood near at hand, an interested spectator. The irrepressible Pat Mooney was at his side.

"Be jabbers, but it's meself as wishes 'em luck, an' many childers."

"Ugh! Good!" replied the chief. The idea of children of that stock had pleased him.

When all was over, and the happy couple were alone in the colonel's tent, the chief suddenly stood before them.

"Eagle Eye go now. He go alone. Big Elk no more aid him. Ut-ta-wan much sorry, dough be much glad for his frien'. Good-by, now." He extended his hand. Clara grasped it and pressed it to her lips in silence. Then Ralph led his noble friend out, and hand in hand they proceeded to the fortress gate, out of which they passed. At the edge of the woods they paused. Placing the chief's hand on his breast, he simply said:

"Chief, God bless you!"

And Eagle Eye was gone.

THE END.

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